

THE POETICAL WORKS OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

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WORDSWORTH'S POETICAL WORKS.

PETER BELL :

A TALE.

Comp. 1798 — Pub. 1819.

What's in a name ?

Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar !

[Written at Alfoxden. Founded upon an anecdote which I read in a newspaper, of an ass being found hanging his head over a canal in a wretched posture. Upon examination a dead body was found in the water, and proved to be the body of its master. The countenance, gait, and figure of Peter were taken from a wild rover with whom I walked from Builth, on the river Wye, downwards, nearly as far as the town of Hay. He told me strange stories. It has always been a pleasure to me through life, to catch at every opportunity that has occurred in my rambles of becoming acquainted with this class of people. The number of Peter's wives was taken from the trespasses, in this way, of a lawless creature, who lived in the county of Durham, and used to be attended by many women, sometimes not less than half a dozen, as disorderly as himself, and a story went in the country that he had been heard to say, while they were quarrelling, "Why can't ye be quiet, there's none so many of you?" Benoni, or the child of sorrow, I knew when I was a schoolboy. His mother had been deserted by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, she herself being a gentlewoman by birth. The circumstances of her story were told me by my dear old dame, Ann Tyson, who was her confidante. The lady died broken-hearted. In the woods of Alfoxden I used to take great delight in noticing the habits, tricks, and physiognomy of asses ; and I have no doubt that I was thus put upon writing the poem out of liking for the creature that is often so dreadfully abused. The crescent moon, which makes such a figure in the prologue, assumed this character one evening while I was watching its beauty in front of Alfoxden House. I intended this poem for the volume before spoken of, but it was not published for more than twenty years afterwards. The worship of the Methodists, or Ranters, is often heard during the stillness of the summer evening, in the country, with affecting accompaniments of rural beauty. In both the psalmody and voice of the preacher there is, not

unfrequently, much solemnity likely to impress the feelings of the rudest characters under favourable circumstances.]

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., P.L., ETC., ETC.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its *minority*:—for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception; or, rather, to fit it for filling *permanently* a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached; and that the attainment of excellence in it may laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

The Poem of Peter Bell, as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, *you* have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring, in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural; and I am persuaded it will be admitted that to you, as a Master in that province of the art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often coupled (to use your own words) for evil and for good; and believe me to be, with earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect, most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, April 7, 1819.

PROLOGUE.

THERE'S something in a flying horse,
There's something in a huge balloon;
But through the clouds I'll never float
Until I have a little Boat,
Shaped like the crescent-moon.¹

¹ 1845.

Whose shape is like the crescent-moon.

And now I *have* a little Boat,
In shape a very crescent-moon :
Fast through the clouds my boat can sail ;
But if perchance your faith should fail,
Look up—and you shall see me soon !

The woods, my Friends, are round you roaring,
Rocking and roaring like a sea ;
The noise of danger's in your ears,
And ye have all a thousand fears
Both for my little Boat and me !

Meanwhile untroubled I admire¹
The pointed horns of my canoe ;
And, did not pity touch my breast
To see how ye are all distress,
Till my ribs ached, I'd laugh at you !

Away we go, my Boat and I—
Frail man ne'er sate in such another ;
Whether among the winds we strive,
Or deep into the clouds we dive,²
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go—and what care we
For treasons, tumults, and for wars ?
We are as calm in our delight
As is the crescent-moon so bright
Among the scattered stars.

1827.

Meanwhile I from the helm admire

1910.

1827.

Or deep into the Heavens we dive,
Or into massy clouds we dive,

1919.

1890.

Up goes my Boat among the stars¹
 Through many a breathless field of light,
 Through many a long blue field of ether,
 Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her :
 Up goes my little Boat so bright !

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull—
 We pry among them all ; have shot
 High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,
 Covered from top to toe with scars :
 Such company I like it not !

The towns in Saturn are decayed,
 And melancholy Spectres throng them ;—²
 The Pleiads, that appear to kiss
 Each other in the vast abyss,
 With joy I sail among them.³

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,
 Great Jove is full of stately bowers ;
 But these, and all that they contain,
 What are they to that tiny grain,
 That little Earth of ours ?⁴

Then back to Earth, the dear green Earth :—
 Whole ages if I here should roam,
 The world for my remarks and me
 Would not a whit the better be ;
 I've left my heart at home.

¹ 1820.

Up goes my boat between the stars

1819.

² 1827.

The towns in Saturn are ill built,
 But proud let *him* be who has seen them ;

1819.

³ 1827.

With joy I sail between them.

1819.

⁴ 1827.

That darling speck of ours.

1819.

See ! there she is, the matchless Earth !¹
 There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean !
 Old Andes thrusts yon craggy spear
 Through the grey clouds : the Alps are here,
 Like waters in commotion !

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands :
 That silver thread the river Dnieper ;
 And look, where clothed in brightest green
 Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen :
 Ye fairies, from all evil keep her !

And see the town where I was born !
 Around those happy fields we span
 In boyish gambols :—I was lost
 Where I have been, but on this coast
 I feel I am a man.

Never did fifty things at once
 Appear so lovely, never, never ;—
 How tunefully the forests ring !
 To hear the earth's soft murmuring
 Thus could I hang for ever !

" Shame on you !" cried my little Boat,
 " Was ever such a homesick Loon,²
 Within a living Boat to sit,
 And make no better use of it ;
 A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon !³

¹ 1836.

And there it is, the matchless earth !

1819.

² 1827.

Was ever such a heartless loon

1830

³ in edd. 1819 and 1820.

Out—out—and, like a brooding hen,
 Beside your sooty hearth-stone cower ;
 Go, creep along the dirt, and pick
 Your way with your good walking stick,
 Just three good miles an hour !

Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet
 Fluttered so faint a heart before ;—
 Was it the music of the spheres
 That overpowered your mortal ears ?
 —Such din shall trouble them no more.

These nether precincts do not lack
 Charms of their own ;—then come with me ;
 I want a comrade, and for you
 There's nothing that I would not do ;
 Nought is there that you shall not see.

Haste ! and above Siberian snows
 We'll sport amid the boreal morning ;
 Will mingle with her lustres gliding
 Among the stars, the stars now hiding,
 And now the stars adorning.

I know the secrets of a land
 Where human foot did never stray ;
 Fair is that land as evening skies,
 And cool, though in the depth it lies
 Of burning Africa.

Or we'll into the realm of Faery,
 Among the lovely shades of things ;
 The shadowy forms of mountains bare,
 And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,
 The shades of palaces and kings !

Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal
 Less quiet regions to explore,
 Prompt voyage shall to you reveal
 How earth and heaven are taught to feel
 The might of magic lore !”
 *

“ My little vagrant Form of light,
 My gay and beautiful Canoe,

Well have you played your friendly part ;
 As kindly take what from my heart
 Experience forces—then adieu !

Temptation lurks among your words :
 But, while these pleasures you're pursuing
 Without impediment or let,
 No wonder if you quite forget ¹
 What on the earth is doing.

There was a time when all mankind
 Did listen with a faith sincere
 To tuneful tongues in mystery versed ;
Then Poets fearlessly rehearsed
 The wonders of a wild career.

Go—(but the world's a sleepy world,
 And 'tis, I fear, an age too late)
 Take with you some ambitious Youth !
 For, restless Wanderer ! I, in truth, ²
 Am all unfit to be your mate.

Long have I loved what I behold,
 The night that calms, the day that cheers ;
 The common growth of mother-earth
 Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,
 Her humblest mirth and tears.

The dragon's wing, the magic ring,
 I shall not covet for my dower,
 If I along that lowly way
 With sympathetic heart may stray,
 And with a soul of power.

¹ 1845.

My radiant pinnace, you forget

1819.

² 1827.

For, I myself, in very truth,

1819

These given, what more need I desire
To stir, to soothe, or elevate ?
What nobler marvels than the mind
May in life's daily prospect find,
May find or there create ?

A potent wand doth Sorrow wield ;
What spell so strong as guilty Fear !
Repentance is a tender Sprite ;
If aught on earth have heavenly might,
'Tis lodged within her silent tear.

But grant my wishes,—let us now
Descend from this ethereal height ;
Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,
More daring far than Hippogriff,
And be thy own delight !

To the stone-table in my garden,
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,
The Squire is come : his daughter Bess
Beside him in the cool recess
Sits blooming like a flower.

With these are many more convened ;
They know not I have been so far ;—
I see them there, in number nine,
Beneath the spreading Weymouth pine !
I see them—there they are !

There sits the Vicar and his Dame ;
And there my good friend, Stephen Otter ;
And, ere the light of evening fail,
To them I must relate the Tale
Of Peter Bell the Potter."

Off flew the Boat—away she flees,
Spurning her freight with indignation !¹
And I, as well as I was able,
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table
Limped on with sore vexation.²

“ O, here he is ! ” cried little Bess—
She saw me at the garden door ;
“ We’ve waited anxiously and long,”
They cried, and all around me throng,
Full nine of them or more !

“ Reproach me not—your fears be still—
Be thankful we again have met ;—
Resume, my Friends ! within the shade
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid³
The well-remembered debt.”

I spake with faltering voice, like one
Not wholly rescued from the pale
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion :
But, straight, to cover my confusion,
Began the promised Tale.⁴

¹ 1845.

Off flew my sparkling Boat in scorn,
Yea, in a trance of indignation ! 1810.

Off flew my sparkling Boat in scorn,
Spurning her freight with indignation ! 1820.

² 1845.

On two poor legs, to my stone-table
Limped on with some vexation. 1819.

On two poor legs, toward my stone-table
Limped on with some vexation. 1827.

³ 1827.

. . . and promptly shall be paid 1819.

⁴ 1827.

Breath failed me as I spake—but soon
With lips, no doubt, and visage pale,
And sore too from a slight contusion,
Did I, to cover my confusion,
Begin the *promised* Tale. 1819.

PART FIRST.

All by the moonlight river side
 Groaned the poor beast—alas ! in vain ;
 The staff was raised to loftier height,
 And the blows fell with heavier weight
 As Peter struck—and struck again.¹

“ Hold ! ” cried the Squire, “ against the rules
 Of common sense you’re surely sinning ;
 This leap is for us all too bold ;
 Who Peter was, let that be told,
 And start from the beginning.”²

1820.

All by the moonlight river side
 It gave three miserable groans ;
 “ ’Tis come then to a pretty pass,”
 Said Peter to the groaning Ass,
 “ But I will *bang* your bones ! ”

1819.

: 1836.

“ Good Sir ! ” the Vicar’s voice exclaimed,
 You rush at once into the middle ; ”
 And little Bess, with accent sweeter,
 Cried, “ O, dear Sir ! but who is Peter ? ”
 Said Stephen, “ ’Tis a downright riddle ! ”

The Squire cried, “ Sure as Paradise
 Was lost to man by Adam’s sinning,
 This leap is for us all too bold ;
 Who Peter was, let that be told,
 And start from the beginning.”

1819.

Like winds that lash the waves, or smite
 The woods, the autumnal foliage thinning—
 “ Hold ! ” said the Squire, “ I pray you, hold !
 Who Peter was, let that be told,
 And start from the beginning.”

1820.

The woods, autumnal foliage thinning—

1827.

——“ A Potter,* Sir, he was by trade,”
 Said I, becoming quite collected ;
 “ And wheresoever he appeared,
 Full twenty times was Peter feared
 For once that Peter was respected.

He, two-and-thirty years or more,
 Had been a wild and woodland rover ;
 Had heard the Atlantic surges roar
 On farthest Cornwall's rocky shore,
 And trod the cliffs of Dover.

And he had seen Caernarvon's towers,
 And well he knew the spire of Sarum ;
 And he had been where Lincoln bell
 Flings o'er the fen that ponderous knell—
 A far-renowned alarum !¹

At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,
 And merry Carlisle had he been ;
 And all along the Lowlands fair,
 All through the bonnie shire of Ayr ;
 And far as Aberdeen.

And he had been at Inverness ;
 And Peter, by the mountain-rills,
 Had danced his round with Highland lasses
 And he had lain beside his asses
 On lofty Cheviot Hills :

¹ 1845.

Flings o'er the fen its ponderous knell,
 Its far-renowned alarum !

1819.

his ponderous knell,
 A far-renowned alarum !

1826.

* In the dialect of the North, a hawker of earthenware is thus designated,

And he had trudged through Yorkshire dales,
Among the rocks and winding *scars* ;
Where deep and low the hamlets lie
Beneath their little patch of sky
And little lot of stars :

And all along the indented coast,
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam ;
Where'er a knot of houses lay
On headland, or in hollow bay ;—
Sure never man like him did roam !

As well might Peter, in the Fleet,
Have been fast bound, a begging debtor ;—
He travelled here, he travelled there ;—
But not the value of a hair
Was heart or head the better.

He roved among the vales and streams,
In the green wood and hollow dell ;
They were his dwellings night and day,—
But nature ne'er could find the way
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before ;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

Small change it made in Peter's heart
To see his gentle panniered train
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,
Where'er the tender grass was leading
Its earliest green along the lane.

In vain, through water, earth, and air,
The soul of happy sound was spread,
When Peter on some April morn,
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

At noon, when, by the forest's edge
He lay beneath the branches high,
The soft blue sky did never melt
Into his heart : he never felt
The witchery of the soft blue sky !

On a fair prospect some have looked
And felt, as I have heard them say,
As if the moving time had been
A thing as steadfast as the scene
On which they gazed themselves away.

Within the breast of Peter Bell
These silent raptures found no place ;¹
He was a Carl as wild and rude
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,
As ever ran a felon's race.

Of all that lead a lawless life,
Of all that love their lawless lives,
In city or in village small,
He was the wildest far of all ;—
He had a dozen wedded wives.

Nay, start not !—wedded wives—and twelve !
But how one wife could e'er come near him,
In simple truth I cannot tell ;
For, be it said of Peter Bell,
To see him was to fear him.

Though Nature could not touch his heart
By lovely forms, and silent weather,
And tender sounds, yet you might see
At once, that Peter Bell and she
Had often been together.

A savage wildness round him hung
As of a dweller out of doors ;
In his whole figure and his mien
A savage character was seen
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

To all the unshaped half-human thoughts
Which solitary Nature feeds
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,
Had Peter joined whatever vice
The cruel city breeds.

His face was keen as is the wind
That cuts along the hawthorn fence ;—
Of courage you saw little there,
But, in its stead, a medley air
Of cunning and of impudence.

He had a dark and sidelong walk,
And long and slouching was his gait ;
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,
You might perceive, his spirit cold
Was playing with some inward bait.

His forehead wrinkled was and furred ;
A work, one half of which was done
By thinking of his '*whens*' and '*hows* ;'
And half, by knitting of his brows
Beneath the glaring sun.

There was a hardness in his cheek,
There was a hardness in his eye,
As if the man had fixed his face,
In many a solitary place,
Against the wind and open sky !

ONE NIGHT, (and now my little Bess !
We've reached at last the promised tale ;)
One beautiful November night,
When the full moon was shining bright
Upon the rapid river Swale,

Along the river's winding banks
Peter was travelling all alone ;—
Whether to buy or sell, or led
By pleasure running in his head,
To me was never known.

He trudged along through copse and brake,
He trudged along o'er hill and dale ;
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,
And for the stars he cared as little,
And for the murmuring river Swale.

But, chancing to espy a path
That promised to cut short the way ;
As many a wiser man hath done,
He left a trusty guide for one
That might his steps betray.

To a thick wood he soon is brought
 Where cheerily his course he weaves,
 And whistling loud may yet be heard,
 Though often buried, like a bird
 Darkling, among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed,
 And on he drives with cheeks that burn
 In downright fury and in wrath;—
 There's little sign the treacherous path
 Will to the road return !

The path grows dim, and dimmer still ;
 Now up, now down, the Rover wends,
 With all the sail that he can carry,
 Till brought to a deserted quarry—¹
 And there the pathway ends.²

He paused—for shadows of strange shape,
 Massy and black, before him lay ;
 But through the dark, and through the cold,³
 And through the yawning fissures old,
 Did Peter boldly press his way

¹ 1827.

Till he is brought to an old quarry—

1819.

² In edition 1819 only.

“What ! wouldst thou daunt me grisly den ?
 Back must I, having come so far ?
 Stretch as thou wilt thy gloomy jaws,
 I'll on, nor would I give two straws
 For lantern or for star !”

³ 1820.

And so when on the huge rough stones
 The black and massy shadows lay,
 And through the dark &c.

1819.

Right through the quarry :—and behold
 A scene of soft and lovely hue !
 Where blue and grey, and tender green,
 Together make as sweet a scene
 As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw
 A little field of meadow ground ;
 But field or meadow name it not ;
 Call it of earth a small green plot,
 With rocks encompassed round.

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,
 But he flowed quiet and unseen ;—
 You need a strong and stormy gale
 To bring the noises of the Swale
 To that green spot, so calm and green !¹

And is there no one dwelling here,
 No hermit with his beads and glass ?
 And does no little cottage look
 Upon this soft and fertile nook ?
 Does no one live near this green grass ?

Across the deep and quiet spot
 Is Peter driving through the grass—
 And now has reached the skirting trees ;²
 When, turning round his head, he sees
 A solitary Ass.

¹ In edition 1819 only.

Now you'll suppose that Peter Bell
 Felt small temptation here to tarry,
 And so it was,—but I must add,
 His heart was not a little glad
 When he was out of the old quarry.

² 1836.

And now he is among the trees ;

1819.

"A prize!" cries Peter—but he first
Must spy about him far and near:
There's not a single house in sight,
No woodman's hut, no cottage light—
Peter, you need not fear!¹

There's nothing to be seen but woods,
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,
And this one Beast, that from the bed
Of the green meadow hangs his head
Over the silent stream.²

¹ 1836.

"No doubt I'm foundered in these woods—
For once," quoth he, "I will be wise,
With better speed I'll back again—
And, lest the journey should prove vain,
Will take yon Ass, my lawful prize!"—

Off Peter hied,— "A comely beast!
Though not so plump as he might be;
My honest friend, with such a platter,
You should have been a little fatter,
But come, Sir, come with me!"

But first doth Peter deem it fit
To spy about him far and near;
There's not a single house in sight,
No woodman's hut, no cottage light—
Peter! you need not fear.

1819.

(The second stanza omitted in 1820.)

"A prize," cried Peter, stepping back
To spy about him far and near.

1827.

² In edd. 1819-1827.

"What's this?" cried Peter, brandishing
A new peeled sapling white as cream;
The Ass knew well what Peter said,
But, as before, hung down his head
Over the silent stream.

1819.

—though, I deem,
The Ass knew well what Peter said,
He, as before, &c.

1820.

—though, I deem,
This threat was understood full well,
Firm, as before, the sentinel
Stood by the silent stream

1827.

His head is with a halter bound ;
The halter seizing, Peter leapt
Upon the Creature's back, and plied
With ready heels his shaggy side ;¹
But still the Ass his station kept.

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,
A jerk that from a dungeon floor
Would have pulled up an iron ring ;
But still the heavy-headed Thing,
Stood just as he had stood before !

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,
"There is some plot against me laid ;"
Once more the little meadow-ground
And all the hoary cliffs around
He cautiously surveyed.

All, all is silent—rocks and woods,
All still and silent—far and near !
Only the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turns round his long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all this ?
Some ugly witchcraft must be here !
—Once more the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turned round his long left ear.

• 1836.

With ready heel the creature's side ;

1819.

With ready heel his shaggy side ;

1827.

Suspicion ripened into dread,¹
 Yet with deliberate action slow,
 His staff high-raising, in the pride
 Of skill, upon the sounding hide,
 He dealt a sturdy blow.²

The poor Ass staggered with the shock ;
 And then, as if to take his ease,³
 In quiet uncomplaining mood,
 Upon the spot where he had stood,
 Dropped gently down upon his knees ;

As gently on his side he fell ;⁴
 And by the river's brink did lie ;
 And, while he lay like one that mourned,
 The patient Beast on Peter turned
 His shining hazel eye.

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,
 A look more tender than severe ;
 And straight in sorrow, not in dread,
 He turned the eye-ball in his head
 Towards the smooth river deep and clear.⁵

¹ " I'll cure you of these desperate tricks,"
 Yet with deliberate action slow. c.

² 1827.
 " I'll cure you of these desperate tricks,"—
 And with deliberate action slow,
 His staff high raising in the pride
 Of skill, upon the Ass's hide
 He dealt a sturdy blow. 1819.

³ 1836.
 What followed ?—yielding to the shock
 The Ass, as if to take his ease, 1819.

⁴ 1836.
 And then upon his side he fell, 1819.

⁵ 1836.
 Towards the river deep and clear. 1819.

Upon the Beast the sapling rings ;
 His lank sides heaved, his limbs they stirred ;¹
 He gave a groan, and then another,
 Of that which went before the brother,
 And then he gave a third.

All by the moonlight river side
 He gave three miserable groans ;
 And not till now hath Peter seen
 How gaunt the Creature is,—how lean
 And sharp his staring bones !²

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay :—
 No word of kind commiseration
 Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue ;
 With hard contempt his heart was wrung,
 With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death ;
 And Peter's lips with fury quiver ;
 Quoth he, " You little mulish dog,
 I'll fling your carcass like a log
 Head-foremost down the river ! "

1832.

Heaved his lank sides, his limbs they stirred. 1819.

1836.

" 'Tis come then to a pretty pass,"
 Said Peter to the groaning Ass,
 " But I will *bang* your bones ! "

And Peter halts to gather breath,
 And now full clearly was it shewn,
 (What he before in part had seen)
 How gaunt was the poor Ass and lean,
 Yea wasted to a skeleton !

1819.

And Peter halts to gather breath,
 And, while he halts, was clearly shewn, &c.

1827.

An impious oath confirmed the threat—
 Whereat from the earth on which he lay
 To all the echoes, south and north,
 And east and west, the Ass sent forth
 A long and clamorous bray !²

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,
 Seems like a note of joy to strike,—
 Joy at the heart of Peter knocks ;
 But in the echo of the rocks
 Was something Peter did not like.

Whether to cheer his coward breast,
 Or that he could not break the chain,
 In this serene and solemn hour,
 Twined round him by demoniac power,
 To the blind work he turned again.

Among the rocks and winding crags ;
 Among the mountains far away ;
 Once more the Ass did lengthen out
 More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,³
 The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray !

What is there now in Peter's heart ?
 Or whence the might of this strange sound ?
 The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,
 The broad blue heavens appeared to glimmer,
 And the rocks staggered all around—

¹ 1836.

But, while upon the ground he lay,	1819.
That instant, while outstretched he lay,	1827.

² 1836.

A loud and piteous bray.	1819.
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³ 1836.

. an endless shout,	1819.
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From Peter's hand the sapling dropped !
Threat has he none to execute ;
" If any one should come and see
That I am here, they'll think," quoth he,
" I'm helping this poor dying brute."

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,
And ventures now to uplift his eyes ;¹
More steady looks the moon, and clear,
More like themselves the rocks appear
And touch more quiet skies.²

His scorn returns—his hate revives ;
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize
With malice—that again takes flight ;
For in the pool a startling sight
Meets him, among the inverted trees.³

Is it the moon's distorted face ?
The ghost-like image of a cloud ?
Is it a gallows there portrayed ?
Is Peter of himself afraid ?
Is it a coffin,—or a shroud ?

1836.

And Peter now uplifts his eyes ;

1819.

1836.

Steady the moon doth look and clear,
And like themselves the rocks appear,
And tranquil are the skies.

1819.

1836.

Whereat, in resolute mood, once more
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize—
Foul purpose, quickly put to flight !
For in the pool a startling sight
Meets him beneath the shadowy trees.

1829.

A grisly idol hewn in stone ?
 Or imp from witch's lap let fall ?
 Perhaps a ring of shining fairies ?
 Such as pursue their feared vagaries ¹
 In sylvan bower, or haunted hall ?

Is it a fiend that to a stake
 Of fire his desperate self is tethering ?
 Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell
 In solitary ward or cell,
 Ten thousand miles from all his brethren ? ²

Never did pulse so quickly throb,
 And never heart so loudly panted : ³
 He looks, he cannot choose but look ;
 Like some one reading in a book—
 A book that is enchanted.

Ah, well-a-day for Peter Bell !
 He will be turned to iron soon,
 Meet Statue for the court of fear !
 His hat is up—and every hair
 Bristles, and whitens in the moon !

¹ 1836.

. . . their brisk vagaries

1810.

² In edition of 1819 only.

Is it a party in a parlour ?
 Crammed just as they on earth were crammed—
 Some sipping punch, some sipping tea,
 But as you by their faces see,
 All silent, and all damned !

³ 1827.

A throbbing pulse the Gazer hath—
 Puzzled he was, and now is daunted ;

He looks, he ponders, looks again ;
 He sees a motion—hears a groan ;
 His eyes will burst—his heart will break—
 He gives a loud and frightful shriek,
 And back he falls, as if his life were flown !¹

PART SECOND.

We left our Hero in a trance,
 Beneath the alders, near the river ;
 The Ass is by the river-side,
 And, where the feeble breezes glide,
 Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite ! but at length
 He feels the glimmering of the moon ;
 Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly sighing—
 To sink, perhaps, where he is lying,
 Into a second swoon !²

He lifts his head, he sees his staff ;
 He touches—'tis to him a treasure !
 Faint recollection seems to tell
 That he is yet where mortals dwell—
 A thought received with languid pleasure !

1836.

And drops, a senseless weight, as if his life were flown. 1819

! 1827.

A happy respite !—but he wakes ;—
 And feels the glimmering of the moon—
 And to stretch forth his hand is trying ;
 Sure, when he knows where he is lying,
 He'll sink into a second swoon.

1819.

His head upon his elbow propped,
 Becoming less and less perplexed,
 Sky-ward he looks—to rock and wood—
 And then—upon the glassy flood ¹
 His wandering eye is fixed.

Thought he, that is the face of one
 In his last sleep securely bound !
 So toward the stream his head he bent,
 And downward thrust his staff, intent
 The river's depth to sound.²

Now—like a tempest-shattered bark,
 That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,
 And in a moment to the verge
 Is lifted of a foaming surge—
 Full suddenly the Ass doth rise !

His staring bones all shake with joy,
 And close by Peter's side he stands :
 While Peter o'er the river bends,
 The little Ass his neck extends,
 And fondly licks his hands.

¹ 1827.

upon the placid flood.

1819.

² 1827.

So faltering not in *this* intent,
 He makes his staff an instrument
 The river's depth to sound—

1819.

So toward the stream his head he bent,
 And downward thrust his staff, intent
 To reach the man who there lay drowned.

1820.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes,
Such life is in his limbs and ears ;
That Peter Bell, if he had been
The veriest coward ever seen,
Must now have thrown aside his fears.

The Ass looks on—and to his work
Is Peter quietly resigned ;
He touches here—he touches there—
And now among the dead man's hair
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls—and looks—and pulls again ;
And he whom the poor Ass had lost,
The man who had been four days dead,
Head-foremost from the river's bed
Uprises like a ghost !

And Peter draws him to dry land ;
And through the brain of Peter pass
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster ;
“ No doubt,” quoth he, “ he is the Master
Of this poor miserable Ass !”

The meagre Shadow that looks on—
What would he now ?¹ what is he doing ?
His sudden fit of joy is flown,—
He on his knees hath laid him down,
As if he were his grief renewing ;

But no—that Peter on his back
 Must mount, he shows well as he can :¹
 Thought Peter then, come weal or woe,
 I'll do what he would have me do,
 In pity to this poor drowned man.



With that resolve he boldly mounts²
 Upon the pleased and thankful Ass ;
 And then, without a moment's stay,
 That earnest Creature turned away,
 Leaving the body on the grass.

Intent upon his faithful watch,
 The Beast four days and nights had past ;
 A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,
 And there the Ass four days had been,
 Nor ever once did break his fast :

¹ 1836.

That Peter on his back should mount
 He shows a wish, well as he can,
 "I'll go, I'll go, whate'er betide—
 He to his home my way will guide,
 The cottage of the drowned man."

1819.

But no—his purpose and his wish
 The suppliant shows, well as he can ;
 Thought Peter, whatsoe'er betide
 I'll go, and he my way will guide
 To the cottage of the drowned man.

1820.

² 1836.

This uttered, Peter mounts forthwith

1819.

This hoping, Peter mounts forthwith

1820.

Encouraged by this hope, he mounts

1827.

This hoping, Peter boldly mounts

1832.

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart ;
The mead is crossed—the quarry's mouth
Is reached ; but there the trusty guide
Into a thicket turns aside,
And deftly ambles towards the south.¹

When hark a burst of doleful sound !
And Peter honestly might say,
The like came never to his ears,
Though he has been, full thirty years,
A rover—night and day !

'Tis not a plover of the moors,
'Tis not a bittern of the fen ;
Nor can it be a barking fox,
Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks,
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen !

The Ass is startled—and stops short
Right in the middle of the thicket ;
And Peter, wont to whistle loud
Whether alone or in a crowd,
Is silent—as a silent cricket.

What ails you now, my little Bess ?
Well may you tremble, and look grave !
This cry—that rings along the wood,
This cry—that floats adown the flood,
Comes from the entrance of a cave :

¹ 1836.

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,
 And if I had the power to say
 How sorrowful the wanderer is,
 Your heart would be as sad as his
 Till you had kissed his tears away !

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,
 All bright with berries ripe and red,
 Into the cavern's mouth he peeps ;
 Thence back into the moonlight creeps ;
 Whom seeks he—whom ?—the silent dead :¹

His father !—Him doth he require—
 Him hath he sought with fruitless pains,
 Among the rocks, behind the trees ;
 Now creeping on his hands and knees,
 Now running o'er the open plains.

And hither is he come at last,
 When he through such a day has gone,
 By this dark cave to be distress
 Like a poor bird—her plundered nest
 Hovering around with dolorous moan !

Of that intense and piercing cry^{*}
 The listening Ass conjectures well ;²
 Wild as it is, he there can read
 Some intermingled notes that plead
 With touches irresistible.

¹ 1845.

What seeks the boy ?—the silent dead !

1819.

Seeking for whom ?—the silent dead ;

1836.

² 1820.

The listening Ass doth rightly spell ;

1819.

But Peter—when he saw the Ass
 Not only stop but turn, and change
 The cherished tenor of his pace
 That lamentable cry to chase—
 It wrought in him conviction strange ;

A faith that, for the dead man's sake
 And this poor slave who loved him well,
 Vengeance upon his head will fall,
 Some visitation worse than all
 Which ever till this night befel.

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home,¹
 Is striving stoutly as he may ;
 But while he climbs the woody hill,
 The cry grows weak—and weaker still ;
 And now at last it dies away.

So with his freight the Creature turns
 Into a gloomy grove of beech,
 Along the shade with footsteps true
 Descending slowly, till the two
 The open moonlight reach.

And there, along the narrow dell,
 A fair smooth pathway you discern,
 A length of green and open road—
 As if it from a fountain flowed—
 Winding away between the fern.

The rocks that tower on either side
 Build up a wild fantastic scene ;
 Temples like those among the Hindoos,
 And mosques, and spires, and abbey windows,
 And castles all with ivy green !

And, while the Ass pursues his way,
 Along this solitary dell,
 As pensively his steps advance,
 The mosques and spires change countenance,
 And look at Peter Bell !

That unintelligible cry
 Hath left him high in preparation,—
 Convinced that he, or soon or late,
 This very night will meet his fate—
 And so he sits in expectation !¹

The strenuous Animal hath clomb
 With the green path ; and now he wends
 Where, shining like the smoothest sea,
 In undisturbed immensity
 A level plain extends.

But whence this faintly-rustling sound
 By which the journeying pair are chased ?²

¹ In edds. 1819-1820.

The verdant pathway, in and out,
 Winds upwards like a straggling chain ;
 And, when two toilsome miles are past,
 Up through the rocks it leads at last
 Into a high and open plain.

² But whence this faintly rustling sound
 By which the pair have long been chased.

—A withered leaf is close behind,¹
 Light plaything for the sportive wind
 Upon that solitary waste.

When Peter spied the moving thing,
 It only doubled his distress ;²
 “Where there is not a bush or tree,
 The very leaves they follow me—
 So huge hath been my wickedness !”

To a close lane they now are come,
 Where, as before, the enduring Ass
 Moves on without a moment's stop,
 Nor once turns round his head to crop
 A bramble-leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,
 The white dust sleeps upon the lane ;
 And Peter, ever and anon
 Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,
 Or in the dust, a crimson stain. *

A stain—as of a drop of blood
 By moonlight made more faint and wan ;
 Ha ! why these sinkings of despair ?
 He knows not how the blood comes there—
 And Peter is a wicked man.

1836.

How blank !—but whence this rustling sound
 Which all too long, the pair hath chased !
 —A dancing leaf is close behind,
 But when that faintly-rustling sound,

1819.

1820.

1836.

When Peter spies the withered leaf,
 It yields no cure to his distress.

1810.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,
 Where he had struck the Ass's head ;
 He sees the blood, knows what it is,—
 A glimpse of sudden joy was his,
 But then it quickly fled ;

Of him whom sudden death had seized
 He thought,—of thee, O faithful Ass !
 And once again those ghastly pains
 Shoot to and fro through heart and reins
 And through his brain like lightning pass.¹

PART THIRD.

I'VE heard of one, a gentle Soul,
 Though given to sadness and to gloom,
 And for the fact will vouch,—one night
 It chanced that by a taper's light
 This man was reading in his room ;

Bending as you or I might bend ²
 At night o'er any pious book,
 When sudden blackness overspread
 The snow-white page on which he read,
 And made the good man round him look.

¹ 1836.

And once again those darting pains,
 As meteors shoot through Heaven's wide plains,
 Pass through his bosom—and repass. 1819.

² 1827.

At night in . . . might read 1810.

The chamber walls were dark all round,—
 And to his book he turned again :
 —The light had left the lonely taper,
 And formed itself upon the paper
 Into large letters—bright and plain !

The godly book was in his hand—
 And, on the page, more black than coal,
 Appeared, set forth in strange array,
 A *word*—which to his dying day
 Perplexed the good man's gentle soul.

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,¹
 Did never from his lips depart ;
 But he hath said, poor gentle wight !
 It brought full many a sin to light
 Out of the bottom of his heart.

Dread Spirits ! to confound the meek²
 Why wander from your course so far,
 Disordering colour, form, and stature !
 —Let good men feel the soul of nature,
 And see things as they are.

Yet, potent Spirits ! well I know,
 How ye, that play with soul and sense,

¹ 1836.

The ghostly word, which ~~thus~~ was framed, 1819.

The ghostly word, full plainly seen, 1827.

² 1836.

Dread Spirits ! to torment the good 1819.

Are not unused to trouble friends
 Of goodness, for most gracious ends—¹
 And this I speak in reverence !

But might I give advice to you,
 Whom in my fear I love so well ;
 From men of pensive virtue go,
 Dread Beings ! and your empire show
 On hearts like that of Peter Bell.

Your presence often have I felt
 In darkness and the stormy night ;
 And, with like force, if need there be,
 Ye can put forth your agency
 When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then, coming from the wayward world,
 That powerful world in which ye dwell,
 Come, Spirits of the mind ! and try
 To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,
 What may be done with Peter Bell !

—O, would that some more skilful voice
 My further labour might prevent !
 Kind Listeners, that around me sit,
 I feel that I am all unfit
 For such high argument.

1936.

I know you, potent Spirits ! well,
 How, with the feeling and the sense
 Playing, ye govern foes or friends,
 Yoked to your will, for fearful ends.

1819.

I've played, I've danced, with my narration ;
I loitered long ere I began :
Ye waited then on my good pleasure ;
Pour out indulgence still, in measure
As liberal as ye can !

Our Travellers, ye remember well,
Are thridding a sequestered lane ;
And Peter many tricks is trying,
And many anodynes applying,
To ease his conscience of its pain.

By this his heart is lighter far ;
And, finding that he can account
So snugly for that crimson stain,
His evil spirit up again
Does like an empty bucket mount.

And Peter is a deep logician
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial ;
" Blood drops—leaves rustle—yet," quoth he,
" This poor man never, but for me,
Could have had Christian burial

And, say the best you can, 'tis plain,
That here has been some wicked dealing ;
No doubt the devil in me wrought ;
I'm not the man who could have thought
An Ass like this was worth the stealing !"

So from his pocket Peter takes
His shining horn tobacco-box ;
And, in a light and careless way,
As men who with their purpose play,
Upon the lid he knocks.

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,
Tell to a curious world the cause
Why, making here a sudden pause,
The Ass turned round his head, and *grinned*.

Appalling process ! I have marked
The like on heath, in lonely wood ;
And, verily, have seldom met
A spectacle more hideous—yet
It suited Peter's present mood.

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth
He in jocose defiance showed—
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,
A murmur, pent within the earth,
In the dead earth beneath the road,

Rolled audibly ! it swept along,
A muffled noise—a rumbling sound !—
'Twas by a troop of miners made,
Plying with gunpowder their trade,
Some twenty fathoms underground.

Small cause of dire effect ! for surely,
If ever mortal, King or Cotter,
Believed that earth was charged to quake
And yawn for his unworthy sake,
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter.

But, as an oak in breathless air
Will stand though to the centre hewn ;
Or as the weakest things, if frost
Have stiffened them, maintain their post ;
So he, beneath the gazing moon !—

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,¹
A little chapel stands alone,
With greenest ivy overgrown,
And tufted with an ivy grove ;

Dying insensibly away
From human thoughts and purposes,
It seemed—wall, window, roof and tower²
To bow to some transforming power,
And blend with the surrounding trees.

As ruinous a place it was,
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife
That served my turn, when following still
From land to land a reckless will³
I married my sixth wife !

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,
And now is passing by an inn
Brim-full of a carousing crew,
That make, with curses not a few.
An uproar and a drunken din.

¹ 1836.

But now the pair have reached a spot
Where, sheltered by a rocky cove, 1819.
Meanwhile the pair have reached a spot, 1820.

² 1836.

The building seems, wall, roof, and tower, 1819.

³ 1836.

Deep sighing as he passed along,
Quoth Peter, "in the shire of Fife,
'Mid such a ruin, following still
From land to land a lawless will, 1819.

I cannot well express the thoughts
Which Peter in those noises found ;—
A stifling power compressed his frame,
While-as a swimming darkness came ¹
Over that dull and dreary sound.²

For well did Peter know the sound ;
The language of those drunken joys
To him, a jovial soul, I ween,
But a few hours ago, had been
A gladsome and a welcome noise.

Now, turned adrift into the past,
He finds no solace in his course ;
Like planet-stricken men of yore,
He trembles, smitten to the core
By strong compunction and remorse.

But, more than all, his heart is stung
To think of one, almost a child ;
A sweet and playful Highland girl,
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,
As beauteous and as wild !

Her dwelling was a lonely house,³
A cottage in a heathy dell ;
And she put on her gown of green,
And left her mother at sixteen,
And followed Peter Bell.

¹ 1836.

As if confusing darkness came

1819.

And a confusing darkness came

1832.

²While clouds of swimming darkness came
Over his eyesight with the sound.

C.

³ 1836.

A lonely house her dwelling was,

1819.

But many good and pious thoughts
Had she ; and, in the kirk to pray,
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or snow,
To kirk she had been used to go,
Twice every Sabbath-day.

And, when she followed Peter Bell,
It was to lead an honest life ;
For he, with tongue not used to falter,
Had pledged his troth before the altar
To love her as his wedded wife.

A mother's hope is hers ;—but soon
She drooped and pined like one forlorn ;
From Scripture she a name did borrow ;
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,
She called her babe unborn.

For she had learned how Peter lived,
And took it in most grievous part :
She to the very bone was worn,
And, ere that little child was born,
Died of a broken heart.

And now the Spirits of the Mind
Are busy with poor Peter Bell ;
Upon the rights of visual sense
Usurping, with a prevalence
More terrible than magic spell.¹

Distraction reigns in soul and sense,
And reason drops in impotence
From her deserted pinnacle.

Close by a brake of flowering furze
 (Above it shivering aspens play) •
 He sees an unsubstantial creature,
 His very self in form and feature,
 Not four yards from the broad highway :

And stretched beneath the furze he sees
 The Highland girl—it is no other ;
 And hears her crying as she cried,
 The very moment that she died,
 “My mother ! oh my mother !”

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,
 So grievous is his heart's contrition ;
 With agony his eye-balls ache
 While he beholds by the furze-brake
 This miserable vision !

Calm is the well-deserving brute,
His peace hath no offence betrayed ;
 But now, while down that slope he wends,
 A voice to Peter's ear ascends,
 Resounding from the woody glade :

The voice, though clamorous as a horn
 Re-echoed by a naked rock,
 Comes from that tabernacle—List ! ¹
 Within, a fervent Methodist
 Is preaching to no heedless flock !

¹ 1832.

Though clamorous as a hunter's horn
 Re-echoed from a naked rock,
 'Tis from that tabernacle—List !

“Repent! repent!” he cries aloud,
 “While yet ye may find mercy;—strive
 To love the Lord with all your might;
 Turn to him, seek him day and night,
 And save your souls alive!

Repent! repent! though ye have gone,
 Through paths of wickedness and woe,
 After the Babylonian harlot;
 And, though your sins be red as scarlet,
 They shall be white as snow!”

Even as he passed the door, these words
 Did plainly come to Peter's ears;
 And they such joyful tidings were,
 The joy was more than he could bear!—
 He melted into tears.

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness!
 And fast they fell, a plenteous shower!
 His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt;
 Through all his iron frame was felt
 A gentle, a relaxing, power!

Each fibre of his frame was weak;
 Weak all the animal within;
 But, in its helplessness, grew mild
 And gentle as an infant child,
 An infant that has known no sin.

’Tis said, meek Beast! that, through Heaven’s
 grace,¹

¹ 1836. (This, and the next stanza, omitted in edition 1827).

’Tis said, that through prevailing grace,

1819.

He not unmoved did notice now
 The cross upon thy shoulder scored,
 For lasting impress, by the Lord ¹
 To whom all human-kind shall bow ;

Memorial ^{*} of his touch—that day ²
 When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,
 Entering the proud Jerusalem,
 By an immeasurable stream
 Of shouting people deified !

Meanwhile the persevering Ass
 Turned towards a gate that hung in view
 Across a shady lane ; his chest ³
 Against the yielding gate he pressed
 And quietly passed through.

And up the stony lane he goes ;
 No ghost more softly ever trod ;
 Among the stones and pebbles, he
 Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,
 As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

Along the lane the trusty Ass
 Went twice two hundred yards or more,

¹ 1836.

Meek beast, in memory of the Lord
 Faithful memorial of the Lord.

1819.

C.

² 1836.

In memory of that solemn day

1819.

³ 1836.

Towards a gate in open view
 Turns up a narrow lane ;

1819.

And no one could have guessed his aim,—
Till to a lonely house he came,
And stopped beside the door.¹

Thought Peter, 'tis the poor man's home !
He listens—not a sound is heard
Save from the trickling household rill ;
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,
Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

She to the Meeting-house was bound
In hopes some tidings there to gather :
No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam ;
She saw—and uttered with a scream,
“ My father ! here's my father ! ”

The very word was plainly heard,
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother—
Her joy was like a deep affright :
And forth she rushed into the light,
And saw it was another !

And, instantly, upon the earth,
Beneath the full moon shining bright,
Close to the Ass's feet she fell ;
At the same moment Peter Bell
Dismounts in most unhappy plight.

1836.

When to a lonely house he came ;
He turned aside towards the same
And stopped before the door.

1840.

As he beheld the Woman lie ¹
 Breathless and motionless, the mind
 Of Peter sadly was confused ;
 But, though to such demands unused,
 And helpless almost as the blind,

He raised her up ; and, while he held
 Her body propped against his knee,
 The Woman waked—and when she spied
 The poor Ass standing by her side,
 She moaned most bitterly.

“ Oh ! God be praised—my heart’s at ease—
 For he is dead—I know it well ! ”
 —At this she wept a bitter flood ;
 And in the best way that he could,
 His tale did Peter tell.

He trembles—he is pale as death ;
 His voice is weak with perturbation ;
 He turns aside his head, he pauses ;
 Poor Peter, from a thousand causes,
 Is crippled sore in his narration.

At length she learned how he espied
 The Ass in that small meadow-ground ;
 And that her Husband now lay dead,
 Beside ~~that~~ luckless river’s bed
 In which he had ~~been~~ drowned.

¹ 1832.

What could he do ?—The Woman lay

1819.

A piercing look the Widow cast ¹
 Upon the Beast that near her stands ;
 She sees 'tis he, that 'tis the same ;
 She calls the poor Ass by his name,
 And wrings, and wrings her hands.

" O wretched loss—untimely stroke !
 If he had died upon his bed !
 He knew not one forewarning pain ;
 He never will come home again—
 Is dead, for ever dead !"

Beside the Woman Peter stands ;
 His heart is opening more and more ;
 A holy sense pervades his mind ;
 He feels what he for human kind
 Had never felt before.

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,
 The Woman rises from the ground—
 " Oh, mercy ! something must be done
 My little Rachel, you must run,—
 Some willing neighbour must be found.

Make haste—my little Rachel—do,
 The first you meet with—bid him come,
 Ask him to lend his horse to-night,
 And this good Man, whom Heaven requite,
 Will help to bring the body home."

¹ 1836.

Away goes Rachel weeping loud ;—
 An Infant, waked by her distress,
 Makes in the house a piteous cry
 And Peter hears the Mother sigh,
 “Seven are they, and all fatherless !”

And now is Peter taught to feel
 That man's heart is a holy thing ;
 And Nature through a world of death,
 Breathes into him a second breath,
 More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits
 In agony of silent grief—
 From his own thoughts did Peter start ;
 He longs to press her to his heart,
 From love that cannot find relief.

But roused, as if through every limb
 Had passed a sudden shock of dread,
 The Mother o'er the threshold flies,
 And up the cottage stairs she hies,
 And on the pillow lays her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside
 Into a shade of darksome trees,
 Where he sits down, he knows not how,
 With his hands pressed against his brow,
 His elbows on his tremulous knees.¹

There, self-involved, does Peter sit
 Until no sign of life he makes,
 As if his mind were sinking deep
 Through years that have been long asleep
 The trance is passed away—he wakes ;

He lifts his head—and sees the Ass
 Yet standing in the clear moonshine ;
 “When shall I be as good as thou ?
 Oh ! would, poor beast, that I had now
 A heart but half as good as thine !”

But *He*—who deviously had sought
 His Father through the lonesome woods,
 Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear
 Of night his grief and sorrowful fear—
 He comes, escaped from fields and floods ;—

With weary pace is drawing nigh ;
 He sees the Ass—and nothing living
 Had ever such a fit of joy
 As hath this little orphan Boy,
 For he has no misgiving !

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,
 And up about his neck he climbs ;
 In loving words he talks to him,
 He kisses, kisses face and limb,—
 He kisses him a thousand times !

This Peter sees, while in the shade
 He stood beside the cottage-door ;
 And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,
 Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,
 “Oh ! God, I can endure no more !”

—Here ends my Tale : for in a trice
 Arrived a neighbour with his horse ;
 Peter went forth with him straightway ;
 And, with due care, ere break of day,
 Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass,
 Whom once it was my luck to see
 Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,
 Help by his labour to maintain
 The Widow and her family.

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,*
 Had been the wildest of his clan,
 Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,¹
 And, after ten months' melancholy,
 Became a good and honest man.

1799.

THE poems belonging to the year 1799 were chiefly, if not wholly, composed at Goslar, in Germany, and all, with four exceptions, appeared in the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800). The exceptions were the following :—The lyric beginning, "I travelled Among unknown men," which was first published in the *Poems* of 1807 ; the *Address to the Scholars of the Village School of* —, the publication of which was delayed till the year 1845 ; and two fragments from *The Prelude*, viz., *The Influence of Natural Objects* (which appeared in *The Friend* in 1809), and *The Simpton Pass* (first published in the collected edition of 1845). Another fragment from *The Prelude*, beginning, "There was a boy," was also published in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1800.

Wordsworth reached Goslar on the 6th of October 1798, and left it on the 10th of February 1799. It is impossible to determine the precise order in which the nineteen or twenty poems associated with this city

¹ 1832.

Forsook his crimes, repressed his folly,

1819.

were composed. But it is certain that the fragment on the immortal boy of Windermere, whom its cliffs and islands knew so well, was written in 1798,—not in 1799, as Wordsworth himself states,—because Coleridge sent a letter to his friend, thanking him for a MS. copy of these lines, and commenting on them, of which the date is “Ratzeburg, Dec. 10, 1798.” I have, however, for obvious reasons, placed the three fragments from *The Recluse* together; and, since Wordsworth gave the date 1799 to the others, it would be gratuitous to suppose that he erred in reference to them all, because we know that his memory failed him in reference to one of the series. Therefore, although he spent more than twice as many days in 1798 as in 1799 at Goslar, I set down this group of poems as belonging to 1799, rather than to the previous year. It will be seen that, after placing all the poems of this Goslar period in the year to which they belong, it is possible also to group them according to their subject matter, without violating chronological order. Thus I place together the fragments afterwards incorporated in *The Prelude*. These are naturally followed by *Nutting*—a poem intended for *The Prelude*, but afterwards excluded as inappropriate. The four “Mathew” poems are placed in sequence, and the same thing is done with the five referring to “Lucy.” Then a small group of three poems comes appropriately together, viz.:—*Ruth*, *Lucy Gray*, and *The Danish Boy*; while the Fenwick note almost necessitates our placing the *Poet's Epitaph* immediately after the *Lines written in Germany*; and with Wordsworth's life at Goslar we naturally associate these five things—the cold winter, *The Prelude*, the Mathew Poems, Lucy, and the Poet's Epitaph.—ED.

THE SIMPLON PASS.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1845.

———Brook and road

Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,¹
 And with them did we journey several hours
 At a slow step.² The immeasurable height
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
 And in the narrow rent, at every turn,

¹ 1845.. . . this gloomy strait, 1850 in *The Prelude*.² 1845.At a slow pace. . . 1850 in *The Prelude*.

Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
 The rocks that muttered close upon our ears,
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the wayside
 As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
 The unfettered clouds and region of the heavens,
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light—
 Were all like workings of one mind, the features
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity,
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without end.

This is an extract from the sixth book of *The Prelude*. It refers to Wordsworth's first experience of Switzerland, when he crossed the Alps by the Simplon route in 1790, in company with his friend Robert Jones.—ED.

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CAELING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD
 AND EARLY YOUTH.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1809.

From an unpublished poem, written in Germany.
 [This extract is reprinted from "The Friend."]

The title of the fragment, as it appeared in *The Friend*, under date Dec. 28, 1800, is "Growth of Genius from the Influence of Natural Objects on the Imagination in Boyhood and Early Youth."—ED.

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe !
 Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought !
 And giv'st to forms and images a breath
 And everlasting motion ! not in vain,
 By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn
 Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
 The passions that build up our human soul ;

Not¹ with the mean and vulgar works of Man ;
 But with high objects, with enduring things,
 With life and nature ; purifying thus
 The elements of feeling and of thought,
 And sanctifying by such discipline
 Both pain and fear,—until we recognise
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
 With stinted kindness. In November days,
 When vapours rolling down the valleys^a made
 A lonely scene more lonesome ; among woods
 At noon ; and mid the calm of summer nights,
 When, by the margin of the trembling lake,
 Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went²
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine :
 Mine was it in the fields³ both day and night,
 And by the waters, all the summer long.
 And in the frosty season, when the sun
 Was set, and, visible for many a mile,
 The cottage-windows through the twilight blazed,^b
 I heeded not the summons : happy time
 It was indeed for all of us ; for⁴ me
 It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud
 The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled about,
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse

1815.

Nor with 1809.

² 1836.

*

. I homeward went 1809.

³ 1845.

't was mine among the fields 1809.

⁴ 1815.

. to me 1809.

That cares not for his¹ home.—All shod with steel
 We hissed along the polished ice, in games
 Confederate, imitative of the chase
 And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
 The pack loud-chiming,² and the hunted hare.
 So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
 And not a voice was idle: with the din
 Smitten,³ the precipices rang aloud;
 The leafless trees and every icy crag
 Tinkled like iron; while far⁴-distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the stars,
 Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west
 The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
 Into a silent bay, or sportively
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
 To cut across the reflex⁵ of a star;
 Image, that, flying still before me,⁶ gleamed
 Upon the glassy plain:⁶ and oftentimes,

¹ 1827.

. . . for its home . . . 1809.

² 1842.

The pack loud bellowing . . . 1809.

³ 1836.

Meanwhile . . . 1809.

⁴ 1845.

. . . while the distant hills . . . 1809.

⁵ 1827.

To cut across the image of a star. 1809.

To cross the bright reflection of a star. 1823.

⁶ 1820.

That gleamed upon the ice. 1809.

When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
 The rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
 Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
 With visible motion her diurnal round !
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a summer sea,^d

^a down the valley.

^b The cottage windows blazed through twilight gloom.

^c That fled, and flying still

^d Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

As there are some variations in the text of this fragment as posthumously published in the first book of *The Prelude*—variations which must have been either made subsequently to the issue of the edition of 1849, or (more probably) written on the margin of the MS. of *The Prelude* before that date, but not transferred to this printed fragment of the larger work—they are indicated, not by the usual figures 1, 2, 3, 4, but by the letters of the alphabet a, b, c, d.

The lake referred to with its “silent bays” and “shadowy banks” is that of Esthwaite; the village clock is that of Hawkshead (see footnotes to *The Prelude*). The only physical accomplishment in which Wordsworth thought he excelled was skating.—ED.

THERE WAS A BOY.

Comp. 1798. — Pub. 1800.

[Written in Germany. This is an extract from the poem on my own practical education. This practice of making an instrument of their own fingers is known to most boys, though some are more skilful at it than others. William Raincock of Rayrigg, a fine spirited lad, took the lead of all my school-fellows in this art.]

The passage occurs in the fifth book of *The Prelude*.—ED.

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye cliffs
 And islands of Winander !—many a time,

At evening, when the earliest stars began¹
 To move along the edges of the hills,
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
 Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake;
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
 Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
 That they might answer him.—And they would shout
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,
 Responsive to his call,—with quivering peals,
 And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
 Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild
 Of jocund din!² And, when there came a pause
 Of silence such as baffled his best skill:³
 Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
 Has carried far into his heart the voice
 Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene
 Would enter unawares into his mind
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,

1815.

At evening, when the stars had just begun

1804

1836.

. A wild scene

Of mirth, and jocund din!

1800.

. Concourse wild

Of mirth, and jocund din!

1805.

1836.

. And, when it chanced
 That pauses of deep silence mocked his skill,

1800.

. And, when a lengthened pause
 Of silence came, and baffled his best skill.1850 in *The Prelude*.

Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.¹
Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale
Where he was born and bred²: the church-yard hangs
Upon a slope above the village-school;
And, through that church-yard when my way has led
On summer-evenings,³ I believe, that there
A long half-hour together I have stood⁴
Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies!⁵

¹ 1815.

. . . . he died when he was ten years old. 1800.
In childhood, ere he was ten years old. 1805.

² 1845.

Fair are the woods, and beauteous is the spot,
The vale where he was born: 1800.
Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale
Where he was born. 1827.
Fair are the woods, and beauteous is the spot
The vale where he was born. 1843.

(Returning to 1800.)

In the *Prelude* the version of 1827 is adopted.

³ 1836.

And there, along that bank, when I have passed
At evening 1800.
And through that church-yard when my way has led
At evening 1827.

⁴ 1836.

. . . . I believe, that near his grave
A full half-hour together 1800.
. . . . that oftentimes
A long half-hour together 1815.

⁵ 1805.

Mute—for he died when he was ten years old. 1800.

Wordsworth sent this poem in MS. to Coleridge, who was then living at Ratzeburg, and Coleridge wrote on the 16th Dec. 1798, in reply:—
“The blank lines gave me as much direct pleasure as was possible in

the general bustle of pleasure with which I received and read your letter. I observed, I remember, that the 'fingers woven,' &c., only puzzled me; and though I liked the twelve or fourteen first lines very well, yet I liked the remainder much better. Well, now I have read them again, they are very beautiful, and leave an affecting impression. That

Uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake,

I should have recognised anywhere; and had I met these lines running wild in the deserts of Arabia, I should have instantly screamed out 'Wordsworth'!"

The William Raincock referred to in the Fenwick note to this poem as his schoolfellow at Hawkshead, was with him also at Cambridge, where he was second Wrangler in 1790. John Fleming of Rayrigg, his brother,—the boy with whom Wordsworth used to walk round the lake of Esthwaite in the morning before school-time ("five miles of pleasant wandering")—was also at John's College, Cambridge, at this time, and was fifth Wrangler in the previous year, 1789. He is referred to both in the second and the fifth books of *The Prelude* (see notes to that poem). It is perhaps not unworthy of note that Wrangham, whose French stanzas on "The Birth of Love" Wordsworth translated into English, was in the same year—1789—third Wrangler, second Smith's prizeman, and first Chancellor's medallist; while Robert Greenwood, "the Minstrel of the Troop," who "blew his flute, alone upon the rock," in Windermere,—also one of the characters referred to in the second book of *The Prelude*,—was sixteenth Wrangler in Wordsworth's year, viz., 1791.—Ed.

NUTTING.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

[Written in Germany; intended as part of a poem on my own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. Like most of my school-fellows I was an impassioned Nutter. For this pleasure, the Vale of Esthwaite, abounding in coppice wood, furnished a very wide range. These verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings I had often had when a boy, and particularly in the extensive woods that still stretch from the side of Esthwaite Lake towards Graythwaite, the seat of the ancient family of Sandys.]

It seems a day
(I speak of one from many singled out)
One of those heavenly days that cannot die;
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,

I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth ¹
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulder slung, ²
 A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my step
 Tow'rd some far-distant wood, ³ a Figure quaint,
 Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds, ⁴
 Which for that service had been husbanded;
 By exhortation of my frugal Dame— ⁵
 Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and, in truth,
 More ragged than need was! O'er pathless rocks,
 Through beds of matted fern and tangled thickets,
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook ⁶
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough
 Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
 Of devastation; but the hazels rose
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung, ⁷

¹ 1827.

When forth I sallied from our cottage-door, * 1800.

² 1832.

And with a wallet o'er my shoulder slung, 1800.

With a huge wallet o'er my shoulder slung, 1815.

³ 1836.

Towards the distant woods . . . 1800.

⁴ 1815.

. . . of Beggar's weeds, 1800.

⁵ 1815.Put on for the occasion, by advice
 And exhortation of my frugal Dame. 1800.⁶ 1836.. . . Among the woods,
 And o'er the pathless rocks, I forced my way
 Until, at length, I came . . . 1800.⁷ 1845.

. . . with milk-white clusters hung, 1800.

The house at which I was boarded during the time I was at school.

1800.

A virgin scene!—A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet;—or beneath the trees I sate
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;
A temper known to those, who, after long
And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
The violets of five seasons re-appear
And fade, unseen by any human eye;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam
And—with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep—
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash
And merciless ravage: and the shady nook
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet being: and, unless I now
Confound my present feelings with the past;
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned¹
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld

¹ 1886.

Even then, when from the bower I turned away, 1800.

The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.—
 Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades
 In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand
 Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

The woods round Esthwaite Lake have doubtless undergone considerable change since Wordsworth's school days at Hawkshead; but hazel coppice is still abundant, and the place to which the Fenwick note refers can easily be identified.—ED.

STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

[Written in Germany, 1799.]

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:
 And I will dare to tell,
 But in the Lover's ear alone,
 What once to me befel.

When she I loved looked every day
 Fresh as a rose in June,¹
 I to her cottage bent my way,
 Beneath an evening moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
 All over the wide lea;
 With quickening pace my horse drew nigh²
 Those paths so dear to me.

¹ 1836.

When she I loved was strong and gay
 And like a rose in June,

1800.

² 1836.

My horse trudged on, and we drew nigh

1800.

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;
 And, as we climbed the hill,
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
 Came near, and nearer still.¹

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
 And all the while my eyes I kept
 On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
 He raised, and never stopped :
 When down behind the cottage-roof,
 At once, the bright moon dropped.²

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
 Into a Lover's head !
 "O mercy !" to myself I cried,
 "If Lucy should be dead !"

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
 Beside the springs of Dove,
 A Maid whom there were none to praise
 And very few to love :

Towards the roof of Lucy's cot
 The moon descended still.

1800.

1815.

At once the planet dropped.

1800.

A violet by a mossy stone
 Half hidden from the eye!
 —Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
 When Lucy ceased to be;
 But she is in her grave, and, oh,
 The difference to me!

I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
 In lands beyond the sea;
 Nor, England! did I know till then
 What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
 Nor will I quit thy shore
 A second time; for still I seem
 To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
 The joy of my desire;
 And she I cherished turned her wheel
 Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
 The bowers where Lucy played;
 And thine too is the last green field
 That Lucy's eyes surveyed.¹

¹ 1806.

And thine is, too, the last green field
 Which Lucy's eyes surveyed.
 And thine is too the last green field
 That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

1807.

1812.

THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND SHOWER.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

[1799. Composed in the Hartz Forest.]

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This Child I to myself will take,
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Not shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form¹
By silent sympathy.

¹ 1802.

A beauty that shall mould her form

1800.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
 To her ; and she shall lean her ear
 In many a secret place
 Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
 And beauty born of murmuring sound
 Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight
 Shall rear her form to stately height,
 Her virgin bosom swell ;
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
 While she and I together live
 Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
 How soon my Lucy's race was run !
 She died, and left to me
 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be.

A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

[Written in Germany.]

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
 I had ~~no~~ human fears :
 She seemed a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
 She neither hears nor sees ;
 Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
 With rocks, and stones, and trees.

A POET'S EPITAPH.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

ART thou a Statist¹ in the van
 Of public conflicts trained and bred?²
 —First learn to love one living man;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou?—draw not nigh!
 Go, carry to some fitter place³
 The keenness of that practised eye,
 The hardness of that sallow face.⁴

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?
 A rosy Man, right plump to see?
 Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,
 * This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,⁵
 A Soldier and no man of chaff?
 Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,
 And lean upon a peasant's staff.

¹ 1836.

Art thou a Statesman

1800.

² 1836.

Of public business trained and bred?

1800.

³ 1827.

. . . . to some other place

1800.

⁴ 1820.

The hardness of thy coward eye,
 The falsehood of thy sallow face.

1800.

⁵ 1820.

Art thou a man of gallant pride,

1800.

Physician art thou ? * one all eyes,
 Philosopher ! a fingering slave,
 One that would peep and botanize
 Upon his mother's grave ?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
 O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
 That he below may rest in peace,
 Thy ever-dwindling soul, away !¹

A Moralist perchance appears ;
 Led, Heaven knows how ! to this poor sod :
 And he has neither eyes nor ears ;
 Himself his world, and his own God ;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
 Nor form, nor feeling, great or small ;²
 A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
 An intellectual All-in-all !

Shut close the door ; press down the latch ;
 Sleep in thy intellectual crust ;
 Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
 Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
 And clad in homely russet brown ?
 He murmurs near the running brooks
 A music sweeter than their own.

1836.

Thy pin-point of a soul away.

1800.

That abject thing, thy soul, away.

1815.

1836.

. . . great nor small ;

1800.

He is retired as noontide dew,
 Or fountain in a noon-day grove ;
 And you must love him, ere to you
 He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
 Of hill and valley, he has viewed ;
 And impulses of deeper birth
 Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
 Some random truths he can impart,—
 The harvest of a quiet eye
 That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak ; both Man and Boy,
 Hath been a idler in the land ;
 Contented if he might enjoy
 The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength ;
 Come, weak as is a breaking wave !
 Here stretch thy body at full length ;
 Or build thy house upon this grave ?

See the Fenwick note to the poem, "Lines written in Germany, &c."
 —ED.

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF —.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1845.

[Composed at Goslar, in Germany.]

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,
 Not long your pastime to prevent ;
 I heard the blessing which to you
 Our common Friend and Father sent.

I kissed his cheek before he died ;
 And when his breath was fled,
 I raised, while kneeling by his side,
 His hand :—it dropped like lead.
 Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all
 That can be done, will never fall
 Like his till they are dead.
 By night or day, blow foul or fair,
 Ne'er will the best of all your train
 Play with the locks of his white hair
 Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours ;
 But he could see the woods and plains,
 Could hear the wind and mark the showers
 Come streaming down the streaming panes.
 Now stretched beneath his grass-green mound
 He rests a prisoner of the ground.
 He loved the breathing air,
 He loved the sun, but if it rise
 Or set, to him where now he lies,
 Brings not a moment's care.
 Alas ! what idle words ; but take
 The Dirge which for our Master's sake
 And yours, love prompted me to make.
 The rhymes so homely in attire
 With learned ears may ill agree,
 But chanted by your Orphan Quire
 Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey stone ;
 Thou Angler, by the silent flood ;
 And mourn when thou art all alone,
 Thou Woodman, in the distant wood !

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy
 Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum ;
 And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy !
 Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb.

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide
 Who checked or turned thy headstrong youth,
 As he before had sanctified
 Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,
 Bold settlers on some foreign shore,
 Give, when your thoughts are turned this way,
 A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain
 With one accord our voices raise,
 Let sorrow overcharged with pain
 Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting
 From ill we meet or good we miss,
 May touches of his memory bring
 Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS AFTER.

LONG time his pulse hath ceased to beat ;
 But benefits, his gift, we trace—
 Expressed in every eye we meet
 Round this dear Vale, his native place.

To stately Hall and Cottage rude
 Flowed from his life what still they hold ;
 Light pleasures, every day, renewed ;
 And blessings half a century old.

Oh, true of heart, of spirit gay,
 Thy faults, where not already gone
 From memory, prolong their stay
 For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss ;
 And what beyond this thought we crave
 Comes in the promise from the Cross,
 Shining upon thy happy grave.

This poem was first published amongst the "Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces," in the edition of 1845 ; and to it Wordsworth appended the note, "See, upon the subject of the three foregoing pieces, *The Fountain, &c.*" He thus connects it directly with the Matthew Poems. The village school was that of Hawkshead, where he spent his boyhood ; and the schoolmaster was the Rev. William Taylor, M.A., Emmanuel College, Cambridge, who was the third of the four masters who taught in the Hawkshead Grammar School during Wordsworth's residence there. He was master from 1782 to 1786. Just before his death he sent for the upper boys of the school (amongst whom was Wordsworth), and calling them into his room, took leave of them with a solemn blessing. This farewell doubtless suggested the lines—

"the blessing which to you
 Our common Friend and Father sent."

Mr Taylor was buried in Cartmell Churchyard. In *The Prelude* Wordsworth writes of him as "an honoured teacher of my youth ;" and describes, with some minuteness, a visit to his grave. It will be seen from the Fenwick note to *Matthew*, that the Hawkshead Schoolmaster, like the Wanderer in *The Excursion*, was "made up out of several, both of his class, and men of other occupations ;" but of the four masters who taught Wordsworth at Hawkshead—Peake, Christian, Taylor, and Bowman—Taylor was far the ablest, the most interesting, and the most beloved by the boys, and it was doubtless the memory of this man that gave rise to all the four Matthew Poems.—ED.

MATTHEW.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

In the School of ——— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the foundation of the School, with the ~~time~~ ^{time} at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to ~~one of these~~ ^{one of these} Names the Author wrote the following lines.

[Such a tablet as is here spoken of continued to be preserved in Hawkshead School, though the inscriptions were not brought down to our time. This, and other poems connected with Matthew, ~~would~~ ^{would} not gain by a literal detail of facts. Like the Wanderer in "The Excursion," this Schoolmaster was made up of several, both of ~~his class~~ ^{his class} and men of other occupations. I do not ask pardon for what ~~there~~ ^{there} is of untruth in such verses, considered strictly as matters of fact. It is enough, if, being true and consistent in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not unworthy of a Poet's calling.]

In edd. 1800 to 1820 the title of this Poem was "~~Lines~~ ^{Lines} written on a Tablet in a School." In edd. 1827 to 1832 it was known by its first line, "If Nature, for a favourite child." After 1836 ~~it was called~~ ^{it was called} "Matthew." The Tablet with the names of the Masters ~~inscribed on it~~ ^{inscribed on it} still exists in Hawkshead School.—ED.

If Nature, for a favourite child,
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray.

Read o'er these lines ; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame,
Cipher and syllable ! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed :
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is ~~silent~~ as a standing pool :
Far ~~from~~ the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness :
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.¹

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !
Thou happy soul ! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee ?

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun ;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
"The will of God be done !"

¹ 1815.

Were tears of light, the oil of gladness.

1800.

A village schoolmaster was he,
 With hair of glittering grey ;
 As blithe a man as you could see
 On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
 And by the steaming rills,
 We travelled merrily, to pass
 A day among the hills.

“ Our work,” said I, “ was well begun :
 Then, from thy breast what thought,
 Beneath so beautiful a sun,
 So sad a sigh has brought ? ”

A second time did Matthew stop ;
 And fixing still his eye
 Upon the eastern mountain-top,
 To me he made reply :

“ Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
 Brings fresh into my mind
 A day like this which I have left
 Full thirty years behind.

And just above yon slope of corn
 Such colours, and no other,
 Were in the sky that April morn,
 Of this the very brother.¹

¹ 1802.

And on that slope of springing corn
 The self-same crimson hue
 Fell from the sky that April morn,
 The same which now I view.

1800.

With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short¹
Beside my daughter's grave.

Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale ;
And then she sang ;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

A basket on her head she bare ;
Her brow was smooth and white :
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free ;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

1836.

With rod and line my silent sport
I plied by Derwent's wave,
And, coming to the church, stopped short

1800.

With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,

1815.

There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine ;
I looked at her, and looked again :
And did not wish her mine !”

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat ;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

“ Now, Matthew !” said I, “ let us match
This water’s pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer’s noon ;

Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made !”

1820.

Now, Matthew, let us try to match

1800.

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
 The spring beneath the tree ;
 And thus the dear old Man replied,
 The grey-haired man of glee :

“ No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears :¹
 How merrily it goes !
 ’Twill murmur on a thousand years,
 And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,
 I cannot choose but think
 How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
 Beside this fountain’s brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
 My heart is idly stirred,
 For the same sound is in my ears
 Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay :
 And yet the wiser mind

1836.

Down to the vale this water steers
 Down to the vale with eager speed
 Behold this Streamlet run,
 From subterranean bondage freed,
 And glittering in the sun.

1800.

Or, Down to the vale with eager speed.
 Behold this streamlet run,
 From subterranean darkness freed,
 A pleasant course to run

c.

c.

Or, Down to the vale this streamlet hies,
 Look, how it seems to run,
 As if ’twere pleased with summer skies,
 And glad to meet the sun.
 No guide it needs, no check it fears,
 How merrily it goes !

c.

c.

Or, Down towards the vale with eager speed,
 Behold this streamlet run

c.

Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,¹
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free :

But we are pressed by heavy laws ;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own ;
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains ;

¹ 1836.

The blackbird in the summer trees,
The lark upon the hill,

And, Matthew, for thy children dead
 I'll be a son to thee !”
 At this he grasped my hand,¹ and said,
 “ Alas ! that cannot be.”

We rose up from the fountain-side ;
 And down the smooth descent
 Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
 And through the wood we went ;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,
 He sang those witty rhymes •
 About the crazy old church-clock,
 And the bewildered chimes.

TO A SEXTON.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

[Written in Germany, 1799.]

LET thy wheel-barrow alone—
 Wherefore, Sexton, piling still
 In thy bone-house bone on bone ?
 'Tis already like a hill
 In a field of battle made,
 Where three thousand skulls are laid ;
 These died in peace each with the other,—
 Father, sister, friend, and brother.

Mark the spot to which I point !
 From this platform, eight feet square,
 Take not even a finger-joint :
 Andrew's whole fireside is there.

Here, alone, before thine eyes,
 Simon's sickly daughter lies,
 From weakness now, and pain defended,
 Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride—
 How he glories, when he sees
 Roses, lilies, side by side,
 Violets in families !
 By the heart of Man, his tears,
 By his hopes and by his fears,
 Thou, too heedless, art the Warden ¹
 Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,
 Let them all in quiet lie,
 Andrew there, and Susan here,
 Neighbours in mortality.
 And, should I live through sun and rain
 Seven widowed years without my Jane.
 O Sexton, do not then remove her,
 Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover

THE DANISH BOY.

A FRAGMENT.

Comp. 1799. Pub. 1800.

[Written in Germany, 1799. It was entirely a fancy ; but intended as a prelude to a ballad poem never written.]

In edd. 1800 to 1832 this poem is called "A Fragment." From 1836 onwards it received the name "The Danish Boy."—Ed.

¹ 1845.

Thou, old Grey-beard ! art the Warden

1800.

I.

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills
 There is a spot that seems to lie
 Sacred to flowerets of the hills,
 And sacred to the sky.
 And in this smooth and open dell
 There is a tempest-stricken tree ;
 A corner-stone by lightning cut,
 The last stone of a lonely hut ;¹
 And in this dell you see
 A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
 The shadow of a Danish Boy.

II.

In clouds above, the lark is heard,
 But drops not here to earth for rest ;²
 Within this lonesome nook the bird ³
 Did never build her nest.⁴
 No beast, no bird hath here his home ;
 Bees, wafted on the breezy air,⁵
 Pass high above those fragrant bells

¹ 1836.

The last stone of a cottage hut.

1800.

² 1827.

He sings his blithest and his best.

1800.

She sings, regardless of her rest.

1820.

But in this lonesome nook the bird

1800.

Within this nook the lonesome bird

1827.

³ 1820.

. his nest.

1800.

⁵ 1827.

The bees borne on the breezy air,

1800.

To other flowers :—to other dells
 Their burthens do they bear ;¹
 The Danish Boy walks here alone ;
 The lovely dell is all his own.

III.

A Spirit of noon-day is he ;
 Yet seems a form of flesh and blood ;²
 Nor piping shepherd shall he be,
 Nor herd-boy of the wood.³
 A regal vest of fur he wears,
 In colour like a raven's wing ;
 It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew ;
 But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue
 As budding pines in spring ;
 His helmet has a vernal grace,
 Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

IV.

A harp is from his shoulder slung ;
 Resting the harp upon his knee,⁴
 To words of a forgotten tongue,
 He suits its melody.⁵

¹ 1827.

Nor ever linger there.

1800.

² 1836.

He seems

.

1800.

³ 1802.A piping Shepherd he might be,
 A Herd-boy of the wood.

1800.

⁴ 1836.

He rests the harp upon his knee,

1800.

⁵ 1836.And there in a forgotten tongue
 He warbles melody.

1800.

Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill ¹
 He is the darling and the joy ;
 And often, when no cause appears,
 The mountain-ponies prick their ears,
 —They hear the Danish Boy,
 While in the dell he sings alone
 Beside the tree and corner-stone.²

v.

There sits he ; in his face you spy
 No trace of a ferocious air,
 Nor ever was a cloudless sky
 So steady or so fair.
 The lovely Danish Boy is blest
 And happy in his flowery cove :
 From bloody deeds his thoughts are far ;
 And yet he warbles songs of war,
 That seem like songs of love,
 For calm and gentle is his mien ;
 Like a dead Boy he is serene.

1820.

Of flocks and herds both far and near,

1809.

Of flocks upon the neighbouring hills,

1802.

When near this blasted tree you pass,
 Two sods are plainly to be seen,
 Close at its root, and each with grass
 Is covered fresh and green.
 Like turf upon a new-made grave
 These two green sods together lie,
 Nor heat, nor cold, nor rain, nor wind
 Can these two sods together bind,
 Nor sun, nor earth, nor sky,
 But side by side the two are laid,
 As if just severed by the spade.

In ed. 1800 only.

LUCY GRAY;

OR, SOLITUDE.

Comp. 1779. — Pub. 1800.

[Written at Goslar, in Germany, in 1799. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl, who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow storm. Her footsteps were tracked by her parents to the middle of a lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body, however, was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated, and the spiritualizing of the character, might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences, which I have endeavoured to throw over common life, with Crabbe's matter-of-fact style of handling subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it; but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment.]

OFt I had heard of Lucy Gray;
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow."

“That, Father! will I gladly do :
’Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon !”

At this the Father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band ;
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That over-looked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,¹
“In heaven we all shall meet ;”
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy’s feet.

¹ 1827.

And now they homeward turned, and cried,
And, turning homeward, now they cried,

1800.

1815.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge ¹
 They tracked the footmarks small ;
 And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
 And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :
 The marks were still the same ;
 They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;
 And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
 Those footmarks, one by one,
 Into the middle of the plank ;
 And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
 She is a living child ;
 That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
 Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
 And never looks behind ;
 And sings a solitary song
 That whistles in the wind.

This poem was illustrated by Sir George Beaumont, in a picture of some merit, which was engraved by P. C. Bromley, and published in the collected editions of 1815 and 1820.—Ed.

¹ 1845.

Then downward from the steep hill's edge

1800.

Half breathless from the steep hill's edge

1832.

RUTH.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

[Written in Germany, 1799. Suggested by an account I had of a wanderer in Somersetshire.]

WHEN Ruth was left half-desolate,
Her Father took another Mate ;
And Ruth, not seven years old,
A slighted child, at her own will ¹
Went wandering over dale and hill,
In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,
And music from that pipe could draw
Like sounds of winds and floods ;
Had built a bower upon the green,
As if she from her birth had been
An infant of the woods.²

Beneath her father's roof, alone
She seemed to live ; her thoughts her own ;
Herself her own delight ;
Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay ;
And, passing thus the live-long day,
She grew to woman's height.³

There came a Youth from Georgia's shore—
A military casque he wore,

¹ 1802.

A slighted child, ...

1800.

²

This Stanza not in edition 1800.

³ 1827.

She passed her time ; and in this way
Grew up to woman's height.

1802.

With splendid feathers drest ;
He brought them from the Cherokees ;
The feathers nodded in the breeze,
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung :
But no ! he spake the English tongue,
And bore a soldier's name ;
And, when America was free
From battle and from jeopardy,
He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek
In finest tones the Youth could speak :
—While he was yet a boy,
The moon, the glory of the sun,
And streams that murmur as they run,
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth ! I guess
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he ;
And, when he chose to sport and play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought,
And with him many tales he brought
Of pleasure and of fear ;
Such tales as told to any maid
By such a Youth, in the green shade,
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout !
 Who quit their fold with dance and shout,
 Their pleasant Indian town,
 To gather strawberries all day long ;
 Returning with a choral song
 When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change
 Their blossoms, through a boundless range
 Of intermingling hues ;¹
 With budding, fading, faded flowers
 They stand the wonder of the bowers
 From morn to evening dew.

He told of the magnolia * spread
 High as a cloud, high over head !
 The cypress and her spire ;
 —Of flowers † that with one scarlet gleam
 Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
 To set the hills on fire.

The youth of green savannahs spake,
 And many an endless, endless lake,
 With all its fairy crowds
 Of islands, that together lie
 As quietly as spots of sky
 Among the evening clouds.

¹ 1836.

He spake of plants divine and strange
 That every day their blossoms change,
 Ten thousand lovely hues !

1800.

. . . every hour

1802.

* *Magnolia grandiflora*. 1800.

† The splendid appearance of these scarlet flowers, which are scattered with such profusion over the Hills in the southern parts of North America, is frequently mentioned by Bartram in his travels. 1800.

“How pleasant,” then he said, “it were ¹
 A fisher or a hunter there,
 In sunshine or in shade
 To wander with an easy mind;
 And build a household fire, and find ²
 A home in every glade!

What days and what bright years!³ Ah me!
 Our life were life indeed, with thee
 So passed in quiet bliss,
 And all the while,” said he, “to know
 That we were in a world of woe,
 On such an earth as this!”

And then he sometimes interwove
 Fond thoughts about a father's love:
 “For there,” said he, “are spun
 Around the heart such tender ties,
 That our own children to our eyes
 Are dearer than the sun.

Sweet Ruth! and could you go with me
 My helpmate in the woods to be,

¹ 1836.

And then he said “How sweet it were”

1800.

² 1845.

A gardener in the shade,
 Still wandering with an easy mind;
 To build a household fire, . . .

1800.

In sunshine or through shade
 To wander with an easy mind;
 And build a household fire, . . .

1836.

³ 1836.

What days, and what sweet years . . .

1800.

Our shed at night to rear ;
Or run, my own adopted bride,
A sylvan huntress at my side,
And drive the flying deer !

Belovèd Ruth !"—no more he said.
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed
A solitary tear :
She thought again—and did agree
With him to sail across the sea,
And drive the flying deer.

" And now, as fitting is and right,
We in the church our faith will plight,
A husband and a wife."
Even so they did ; and I may say
That to sweet Ruth that happy day
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,
Delighted all the while to think
That on those lonesome floods,
And green savannahs, she should share
His board with lawful joy, and bear
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,
This stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
And, with his dancing crest,
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
 The tumult of a tropic sky,
 Might well be dangerous food
 For him, a Youth to whom was given
 So much of earth—so much of heaven,
 And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
 Irregular in sight or sound
 Did to his mind impart
 A kindred impulse, seemed allied
 To his own powers, and justified
 The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
 The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
 Fair trees and gorgeous flowers;¹
 The breezes their own languor lent;
 The stars had feelings, which they sent
 Into those favoured bowers.²

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween
 That sometimes there did intervene
 Pure hopes of high intent;
 For passions, linked to forms so fair
 And stately, needs must have their share
 Of noble sentiment.

¹ 1845.

Fair trees, and lovely flowers ;

1800.

² 1845.

Into those magic bowers.

1800.

Into those gorgeous bowers.

1815.

But ill he lived, much evil saw,
 With men to whom no better law
 Nor better life was known ;
 Deliberately, and undeceived,
 Those wild men's vices he received,
 And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame
 Were thus impaired, and he became
 The slave of low desires :
 A Man who without self-control
 Would seek what the degraded soul
 Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight
 Had wooed the Maiden, day and night
 Had loved her, night and morn :
 What could he less than love a Maid
 Whose heart with so much nature played ?
 So kind and so forlorn !

Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,
 " O Ruth ! I have been worse than dead ;
 False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain,
 Encompassed me on every side
 When I, in confidence and pride,
 Had crossed the Atlantic main.¹

Before me shone a glorious world—
 Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled

¹ This and the next two stanzas do not occur in edd. 1800 to 1815.
 Ed.

To music suddenly :¹
 I looked upon those hills and plains,
 And seemed as if let loose from chains,
 To live at liberty.

No more of this ; for now, by thee,
 Dear Ruth ! more happily set free
 With nobler zeal I burn ;
 My soul from darkness is released,
 Like the whole sky when to the east
 The morning doth return.”²

Full soon that better mind was gone ;³
 No hope, no wish remained, not one,—
 They stirred him now no more ;
 New objects did new pleasure give,
 And once again he wished to live
 As lawless as before.

¹ 1845 and c.

It was a fresh and glorious world,	
A banner bright that was unfurled	
Before me suddenly ;	1820.
. . . bright, that shone unfurled	1836.

² 1845.

But wherefore speak of this ? For now,	
Sweet Ruth ! with thee, I know not how,	
I feel my spirit burn—	
Even as the East when day comes forth ;	
And, to the West, and South, and North,	
The morning doth return.	1820.
Dear Ruth ! with thee	1836.

³ 1845.

But now the pleasant dream was gone.	1800.
Full soon that purer mind was gone.	1820.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,
 They for the voyage were prepared,
 And went to the sea-shore ;
 But, when they thither came, the Youth
 Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth
 Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth !—Such pains she had,
 That she in half a year was mad,
 And in a prison housed ;
 And there, with many a doleful song
 Made of wild words, her cup of wrong¹
 She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,
 Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,
 Nor pastimes of the May ;
 —They all were with her in her cell ;
 And a clear brook with cheerful knell²
 Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,
 There came a respite to her pain ;
 She from her prison fled ;
 But of the Vagrant none took thought ;
 And where it liked her best she sought
 Her shelter and her bread.

¹ 1836.

And there, exulting in her wrongs,
 Among the music of her songs

1800

And there she sang tumultuous songs
 By recollection of her wrongs

1820.

² 1836.

And a wild brook with cheerful knell

1800.

Among the fields she breathed again :
 The master-current of her brain
 Ran permanent and free ;
 And, coming to the Banks of Tone,*
 There did she rest ; and dwell alone¹
 Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain,² the tools
 That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,
 And airs that gently stir
 The vernal leaves—she loved them still ;
 Nor ever taxed them with the ill
 Which had been done to her.

A Barn her *winter* bed supplies :
 But, till the warmth of summer skies
 And summer days is gone,
 (And all do in this tale agree)³
 She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,
 And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray !
 And Ruth will, long before her day,

¹ 1802.

And to the pleasant banks of Tone
 She took her way, to dwell alone 1800.

² 1802.

The engines of her grief, . . . 1800.

³ 1805.

(And in this tale we all agree) 1800.

* The Tone is a river of Somersetshire at no great distance from the Quantock Hills. These hills, which are alluded to a few stanzas below, are extremely beautiful, and in most places richly covered with coppice woods. 1800.

Be broken down and old :
Sore aches she needs must have ! but less
Of mind than body's wretchedness,
From damp, and rain, and cold.¹

If she is prest by want of food,
She from her dwelling in the wood
Repairs to a roadside ;
And there she begs at one steep place
Where up and down with easy pace
The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,
Or thrown away ; but with a flute
Her loneliness she cheers :
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,
At evening in his homeward walk
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills
Setting her little water-mills
By spouts and fountains wild—
Such small machinery as she turned
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,
A young and happy Child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,
Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould
Thy corpse shall buried be,
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
And all the congregation sing
A Christian psalm for thee.

¹ This stanza is not in the edition of 1800.

The following extracts from Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal* give the dates of the stanzas added to *Ruth* in subsequent editions:—Sunday, March 8th, 1802.—I stitched up *The Pedlar*, wrote out *Ruth*, read it with the alterations. . . . William came home. He brought two new stanzas of *Ruth*.”—ED.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY,

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

Comp. 1799. — Pub. 1800.

[A bitter winter it was when these verses were composed by the side of my sister, in our lodgings at a draper's house, in the romantic imperial town of Goslar, on the edge of the Hartz Forest. In this town the German emperors of the Franconian Line were accustomed to keep their court, and it retains vestiges of ancient splendour. So severe was the cold of this winter, that when we passed out of the parlour warmed by the stove, our cheeks were struck by the air as by cold iron. I slept in a room over a passage that was not ceiled. The people of the house used to say rather unfeelingly, that they expected I should be frozen to death some night; but with the protection of a pelisse lined with fur, and a dog's skin bonnet, such as was worn by the peasants, I walked daily on the ramparts, or on a sort of public ground or garden, in which was a pond. Here I had no companion but a kingfisher, a beautiful creature that used to glance by me. I consequently became much attached to it. During these walks I composed the poem that follows, 'The Poet's Epitaph.']

The reader must be apprised that the Stoves in North Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse !¹
 Let me have the song of the kettle ;
 And the tongs and the poker, instead of that horse
 That gallops away with such fury and force
 On this dreary dull plate of black metal.²

¹ 1820.

A fig for your languages 1900.

² In edd. 1800 to 1815.

Our earth is no doubt made of excellent stuff,
 But her pulses beat slower and slower,
 The weather in Forty was cutting and rough,
 And then, as Heaven knows, the glass stood low enough,
 And *now* it is four degrees lower.

See that Fly,¹—a disconsolate creature ! perhaps
A child of the field or the grove :
And, sorrow for him ! the dull treacherous heat
Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove,

Alas ! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ !
He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, then in search of the wall,²
And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller bemazed :
The best of his skill he has tried ;
His feelers, methinks, I can see him put forth
To the east and the west, to the south and the north ;
But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him,³ foot, leg, and thigh !
His eyesight and hearing are lost ;
Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws ;
And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze
Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him—while I
Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love ;
As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,
As if green summer grass were the floor of my room,
And woodbines were hanging above.

¹ 1820. Here's a Fly 1800.

² 1836. . . . and now back to the wall, 1800.

³ 1845. See ! his spindles sink under him, . . 1800.
How his spindles sink under him, . . 1827.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless Thing !
 Thy life I would gladly sustain
 Till summer come up from the south, and with crowds
 Of thy brethren a march thou should'st sound through the
 clouds,
 And back to the forests again !

1800.

Towards the close of December 1799, Wordsworth took up his abode at Townend, Grasmere, and the poems belonging to the following year (1800), are more particularly associated with that district of the Lakes. Two of them—fragments of an unpublished book of *The Recluse*, entitled “Home at Grasmere”—refer to his settlement at Dove Cottage. Others—such as *Michael*, and *The Brothers*—classed by him afterwards amongst the “Poems founded on the Affections,” deal with incidents in the rural life of the dalesmen of Westmoreland and Cumberland. Most of the “Poems on the Naming of Places” were written during this year; and the “places” are all in the neighbourhood of Grasmere. To these may be added several “pastoral” poems, such as *The Idle Shepherd Boys* (the story of Dungeon-Ghyll Force), sundry “Poems of the Fancy,” and one or two “Inscriptions.” In all, twenty-five poems belong to the year 1800; and, with the exception of the two fragments of *The Recluse*, they were published during the same year in the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*. —ED.

It is impossible to fix the precise date of the composition of the following fragments from the first book of *The Recluse*. They refer to the settlement at Dove Cottage, where Wordsworth went to reside with his Sister, on the 21st of December 1799. They may therefore fitly introduce the poems belonging to the year 1800. They were first published in 1850 in the *Memoirs* of the poet, by the Bishop of Lincoln.

ON NATURE'S INVITATION DO I COME.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1850.

On Nature's invitation do I come,
 By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mislead,
 That made the calmest, fairest spot on earth,
 With all its unappropriated good,
 My own, and not mine only, for with me

Entrenched—say rather peacefully embowered—
 Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,
 'A younger orphan of a Name extinct,
 The only daughter of my parents dwells :
 Aye, think on that, my heart, and cease to stir ;
 Pause upon that, and let the breathing frame
 No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.
 Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God
 For what hath been bestowed, then where, where then
 Shall gratitude find rest ? Mine eyes did ne'er
 Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind
 Take pleasure in the midst of happy thought,
 But either she, whom now I have, who now
 Divides with me that loved abode, was there,
 Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps turned,
 Her voice was like a hidden bird that sang ;
 The thought of her was like a flash of light
 Or an unseen companionship, a breath
 Or fragrance independent of the wind.
 In all my goings, in the new and old
 Of all my meditations, and in this
 Favourite of all, in this the most of all. . . .
 Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in.
 Now on the clear and open day I feel
 Your guardianship : I take it to my heart ;
 'Tis like the solemn shelter of the night.
 But I would call thee beautiful ; for mild,
 And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,
 Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,
 Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art pleased,
 Pleased with thy crags, and woody steeps, thy lake.
 Its one green island, and its winding shores,
 The multitude of little rocky hills,
 Thy church, and cottages of mountain-stone

Clustered like stars some few, but single most,
 And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,
 Or glancing at each other cheerful looks
 Like separated stars, with clouds between.

This Grasmere cottage is, even more than Rydal Mount, identified with Wordsworth's "poetic prime." It had once been a public-house, bearing the sign of the Dove and Olive Bough—and as such is referred to in *The Waggoner*—from which circumstance it was for a long time, and is still occasionally, called "Dove Cottage." A small two storied house, it is described somewhat minutely—as it was in Wordsworth's time—by De Quincey, in his "Recollections of the Lakes," and by the Bishop of Lincoln, in his *Memoirs* of the poet. "The front of it faces the lake; behind is a small plot of orchard and garden ground, in which there is a spring and rocks; the enclosure shelves upwards towards the woody sides of the mountains above it." * The following is De Quincey's description of it, as he saw it in the summer of 1807. "A white cottage, with two yew trees breaking the glare of its white walls" (these yews still stand on the eastern side of the cottage). "A little semi-vestibule between two doors prefaced the entrance into what might be considered the principal room of the cottage. It was an oblong square, not above eight and a half feet high, sixteen feet long, and twelve broad; wainscoted from floor to ceiling with dark polished oak, slightly embellished with carving. One window there was—a perfect and unpretending cottage window, with little diamond panes, embowered at almost every season of the year with roses; and, in the summer and autumn, with a profusion of jasmine, and other fragrant shrubs. . . . I was ushered up a little flight of stairs, fourteen in all, to a little drawing-room, or whatever the reader chooses to call it. Wordsworth himself has described the fireplace of this room as his

Half-kitchen and half-parlour fire.

It was not fully seven feet six inches high, and in other respects pretty nearly of the same dimensions as the rustic hall below. There was, however, in a small recess, a library of perhaps three hundred volumes, which seemed to consecrate the room as the poet's study and composing room, and such occasionally it was. But far oftener he both studied, as I found, and composed on the high road." †

Other poems of later years refer, much more fully than the above

* *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 156.

† "Recollections of the Lakes," &c., pp. 130-137, Works, vol. ii., ed. 1862.

fragment does, to this cottage and its orchard ground, where so many of his lyrics were composed. Some allusion to the latter may, however, be made here.

This orchard ground behind the cottage, which was for the most part in grass, sloped upwards; but a considerable portion of the natural rock was exposed; and in the face of this rock, some rough stone steps were cut by Wordsworth, and a near neighbour of his, John Fisher, so as conveniently to reach the upper terrace, where he built a small arbour. The ground is not much altered since 1800. The short terrace walk is curved, with a sloping bank of grass above, shaded by apple trees, hazel, holly, laburnum, laurel, and mountain ash. Below the terrace is the well, which supplied the cottage in Wordsworth's time; and there the large leaved primroses still grow, doubtless the successors of those planted by his own and his sister's hands. Above, and amongst the rocks, are the daffodils, which they also brought to their "garden-ground;" the Christmas roses which they planted near the well have been removed to the eastern side of the garden, where they still flourish luxuriantly. The box-wood planted by the poet grows close to the cottage. The arbour is now gone; and, in the place where it stood, a seat is erected. The hidden brook still sings its under-song, as it used to do, "its quiet soul on all bestowing," and the green linnet may doubtless be seen now, as it used to be in 1803. The allusions to this garden ground at Dove Cottage, in the poems which follow, will be noted as they occur.—ED.

"BLEAK SEASON WAS IT, TURBULENT AND WILD."

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1850.

Bleak season was it, turbulent and wild,
 When hitherward we journeyed, side by side,
 Through bursts of sunshine and through flying showers,
 Paced the long vales, how long they were, and yet
 How fast that length of way was left behind,
 Wensley's rich vale and Sedberge's naked heights.
 The frosty wind, as if to make amends
 For its keen breath, was aiding to our steps,
 And drove us onward as two ships at sea;
 Or, like two birds, companions in mid-air,
 Parted and reunited by the blast.
 Stern was the face of nature; we rejoiced

In that stern countenance; for our souls thence drew
 A feeling of their strength. The naked trees,
 The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared
 To question us, "Whence come ye? To what end?"

This poem refers to the winter journey on foot which Wordsworth and his sister took from Sockburn to Grasmere by Wensleydale and Askrigg, and as he has left us an account of this journey in a letter to Coleridge, written a few days after their arrival at Grasmere—a letter in which his characterisation of nature is almost as happy as it is in his best poems—some extracts from it are appended.—ED.

"We left Sockburn last Tuesday morning. We crossed the Tees by moonlight in the Sockburn fields, and after ten good miles' riding came in sight of the Swale. It is there a beautiful river, with its green bank and flat holms scattered over with trees. Four miles further brought us to Richmond, with its huge ivied castle, its friarage steeple, its castle tower resembling a huge steeple. . . . We were now in Wensleydale, and D. and I set off side by side to foot it as far as Kendal. . . . We reached Askrigg, twelve miles, before six in the evening, having been obliged to walk the last two miles over hard frozen roads. . . . Next morning the earth was thinly covered with snow, enough to make the road soft and prevent its being slippery. On leaving Askrigg we turned aside to see another waterfall. It was a beautiful morning, with driving snow showers, which disappeared by fits, and unveiled the east, which was all one delicious pale orange colour. After walking through two small fields we came to a mill, which we passed, and in a moment a sweet little valley opened before us, with an area of grassy ground, and a stream dashing over various laminæ of black rocks close under a bank covered with firs; the bank and stream on our left, another woody bank on our right, and the flat meadow in front, from which, as at Buttermere, the stream had retired, as it were, to hide itself under the shade. As we walked up this delightful valley we were tempted to look back perpetually on the stream, which reflected the orange lights of the morning among the gloomy rocks, with a brightness varying with the agitation of the current. The steeple of Askrigg was between us and the east, at the bottom of the valley; it was not a quarter of a mile distant. . . . The two banks seemed to join before us with a facing of rock common to them both. When we reached this bottom the valley opened out again; two rocky banks on each side, which, hung with ivy and moss, and fringed luxuriantly with brushwood, ran directly parallel to each other, and then approaching with a gentle curve at their point of union, presented a lofty waterfall, the termination of the valley. It was a keen frosty morning, showers of snow threatening us, but the sun bright and active. We had a task of twenty-one miles to perform in a short winter's day. . . . On a nearer approach the waters seemed to fall

down a tall arch or niche that had shaped itself by insensible moulderings in the wall of an old castle. We left this spot with reluctance, but highly exhilarated. . . . It was bitter cold, the wind driving the snow behind us in the best style of a mountain storm. We soon reached an inn at a place called Hardrane, and descending from our vehicles, after warming ourselves by the cottage fire, we walked up the brook-side to take a view of a third waterfall. We had not walked above a few hundred yards between two winding rocky banks before we came full upon the waterfall, which seemed to throw itself in a narrow line from a lofty wall of rock, the water, which shot manifestly to some distance from the rock, seeming to be dispersed into a thin shower scarcely visible before it reached the bason. We were disappointed in the cascade itself, though the introductory and accompanying banks were an exquisite mixture of grandeur and beauty. . . . After cautiously sounding our way over stones of all colours and sizes, encased in the clearest water formed by the spray of the fall, we found the rock, which before had appeared like a wall, extending itself over our heads, like the ceiling of a huge cave, from the summit of which the waters shot directly over our heads into a bason, and among fragments wrinkled over with masses of ice as white as snow, or rather, as Dorothy says, like congealed froth. The water fell at least ten yards from us, and we stood directly behind it, the excavation not so deep in the rock as to impress any feeling of darkness, but lofty and magnificent ; but in connection with the adjoining banks excluding as much of the sky as could well be spared from a scene so exquisitely beautiful. The spot where we stood was as dry as the chamber in which I am now sitting, and the incumbent rock, of which the groundwork was limestone, veined and dappled with colours which melted into each other with every possible variety of colour. On the summit of the cave were three festoons, or rather wrinkles, in the rock, run up parallel like the folds of a curtain when it is drawn up. Each of these was hung with icicles of various length, and nearly in the middle of the festoon, in the deepest valley of the waves that ran parallel to each other, the stream shot from the rows of icicles in irregular fits of strength, and with a body of water that varied every moment. Sometimes the stream shot into the bason in one continued current ; sometimes it was interrupted almost in the midst of its fall, and was blown towards part of the waterfall at no great distance from our feet like the heaviest thunder shower. In such a situation you have at every moment a feeling of the presence of the sky. Large fleecy clouds drove over our heads above the rush of the water, and the sky appeared of a blue more than usually brilliant. The rocks on each side, which, joining with the side of this cave, formed the vista of the brook, were chequered with three diminutive waterfalls, or rather courses of water. Each of these was a miniature of all that summer and winter can produce of delicate beauty. The rock in the centre of the falls, where the water was most abundant, a deep black, the adjoining parts yellow, white,

purple, and dove colour, covered with water — plants, the most vivid green, and hung with streaming icicles, that in some places seem to conceal the verdure of the plants and the violet and yellow variegation of the rocks; and in some places render the colours more brilliant. I cannot express to you the enchanting effect produced by this Arabian scene of colour as the wind blew aside the great waterfall behind which we stood, and alternately hid and revealed each of these fairy objects in irregular succession, or displayed them with various gradations of distinctness as the intervening spray was thickened or dispersed. What a scene too in summer! In the luxury of our imagination we could not help feeding upon the pleasure which this cave, in the heat of a July noon, would spread through a frame exquisitely sensible. That huge rock on the right, the bank winding round on the left with all its living foliage, and the breeze stealing up the valley, and bedewing the cavern with the freshest imaginable spray. And then the murmur of the water, the quiet, the seclusion, and a long summer day."

THE BROTHERS.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[This poem was composed in a grove at the north-eastern end of Grasmere lake, which grove was in a great measure destroyed by turning the high road along the side of the water. The few trees that are left were spared at my intercession. The poem arose out of the fact, mentioned to me at Ennerdale, that a shepherd had fallen asleep upon the top of the rock called the Pillar, and perished as here described, his staff being left midway on the rock.]*

"THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us! needs must live
A profitable life: some glance along,
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted: some, as wise,
Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,¹

1827.

Upon the forehead of a jutting crag
Sit perched with book and pencil on their knee,
And look and scribble

1800.

This poem was intended to be the concluding poem of a series of pastorals, the scene of which was laid among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. I mention this to apologise for the abruptness with which the poem begins. Note to edd. 1800 to 1832.

Will look ~~and~~ scribble, scribble on and look,
 Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
 Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.
 But for that moping Son of Idleness,
 Why can he tarry *yonder*?—In our church-yard
 Is ~~neither~~ epitaph nor monument,
 Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread
 And a few natural graves.”

To Jane, his wife,

Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.
 It was a July evening; and he sate
 Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves
 Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,
 Employed in winter's work. Upon the stone
 His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,
 While, from the twin cards toothed with glittering wire,
 He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
 Who, in the open air, with due accord
 Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps,
 Her large round wheel was turning.¹ Towards the field
 In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,
 Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
 While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent
 Many a long look of wonder: and at last,
 Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge²
 Of carded wool which the old man had piled
 He laid his implements with gentle care,
 Each in the other locked; and, down the path

¹ 1836.

Who turned her large round wheel in the open air
 With back and forward steps.

1800.

² 1815.

. the snowy ridge

1800.

That from his cottage¹ to the church-yard led,
 He took his way, impatient to accost
 The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,
 A Shepherd lad ; who ere his sixteenth year
 Had left that calling, tempted to entrust
 His expectations to the fickle winds
 And perilous waters ; with the mariners
 A fellow-mariner ;—and so had fared
 Through twenty seasons ;² but he had been reared
 Among the mountains, and he in his heart
 Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
 Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
 The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
 Of caves and trees :—and, when the regular wind
 Between the tropics filled the steady sail,
 And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
 Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;
 And, while the broad blue wave and sparkling foam
 Flashed round him images and hues, that wrought
 In union with the employment of his heart,
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep,

¹ 1827.

Which from his cottage 1800.

² 1815.

. who ere his thirteenth year
 * Had changed his calling, with the mariners
 A fellow-mariner, and so had fared
 Through twenty seasons ; 1800.

Saw mountains ; saw the forms of sheep that grazed
On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
And shepherds clad in the same country grey
Which he himself had worn.*

And now, at last,¹
From perils manifold, with some small wealth
Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,²
To his paternal home he is returned,
With a determined purpose to resume
The life he had lived there ; both for the sake
Of many darling pleasures, and the love
Which to an only brother he has borne
In all his hardships, since that happy time
When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
Were brother-shepherds on their native hills.
—They were the last of all their race : and now,
When Leonard had approached his home, his heart
Failed in him ; and, not venturing to enquire
Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,³
He to the solitary church-yard turned ;⁴
That, as he knew in what particular spot
His family were laid, he thence might learn
If still his Brother lived, or to the file

¹ 1815.

And now at length

1800.

² 1827.

. . . traffic in the Indian isles,

1800

³ 1836.

. . . of one whom he so dearly loved,

1800.

⁴ 1836.

Towards the church-yard he had turned aside ;

1800.

* This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr Gilbert, author of the Hurricane. 1800.

Another grave was added.—He had found
 Another grave,—near which a full half-hour
 He had remained ; but, as he gazed, there grew
 Such a confusion in his memory,
 That he began to doubt ; and even to hope ¹
 That he had seen this heap of turf before,—
 That it ~~was~~ not another grave ; but one
 He had forgotten. He had lost his path
 As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked ²
 Through fields which once had been well known to him
 And oh what joy this recollection now
 Sent to his heart ! he lifted up his eyes,
 And, looking round, imagined that he saw ³
 Strange alteration wrought on every side
 Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks
 And everlasting hills themselves were changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field had come,
 Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard gate
 Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure, limb by limb
 Perused him with a gay complacency.⁴
 Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,
 'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path
 Of the world's business to go wild alone :
 His arms have a perpetual holiday ;
 The happy man will creep about the fields,

¹ 1836.

.	.	.	.	and he had hopes	1800.
.	.	.	.	and hope was his	1832.

² 1815.

As up the vale he came that afternoon,	1800.
--	-------

³ 1815.

And looking round he thought that he perceived	1800.
--	-------

⁴ 1815.

He scanned him with a gay complacency.	1800
--	------

Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
 Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles
 Into his face, until the setting sun
 Write fool upon his forehead.—Planted thus
 Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate
 Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared
 The good Man might have communed with himself,
 But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,
 Approached: he recognised the Priest at once,
 And, after greetings interchanged, and given
 By Leonard to the Vicar as to one
 Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales, a quiet life:
 Your years make up one peaceful family;
 And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come,
 And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
 They cannot be remembered? Scarce a funeral
 Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months;
 And yet, some changes must take place among you:
 And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,
 Can trace the finger of mortality,
 And see, that with our threescore years and ten
 We are not all that perish.—I remember,
 (For many years ago I passed this road)
 There was a foot-way all along the fields
 By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft!
 To me it does not seem to wear the face
 Which then it had!

Priest. Nay, Sir,¹ for aught I know,
 That chasm is much the same—

Leonard. But, surely, yonder—

¹ 1815.

Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend
 That does not play you false.—On that tall pike
 (It is the loneliest place of all these hills)
 There were two springs which bubbled side by side,*
 As if they had been made that they^{*} might be
 Companions for each other:¹ the huge crag
 Was rent with lightning—one hath disappeared;
 The other, left behind, is flowing still.
 For accidents and changes such as these
 We want not store of them;²—a water-spout
 Will bring down half a mountain; what a feast
 For folks that wander up and down like you,
 To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff
 One roaring cataract! a sharp May-storm
 Will come with loads of January snow,
 And in one night send twenty score of sheep
 To feed the ravens; or a shepherd dies
 By some untoward death among the rocks:
 The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge;
 A wood is felled:—and then for our own homes!
 A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,
 A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
 The old house-clock is decked with a new face;
 And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates
 To chronicle the time, we all have here
 A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,
 For the whole dale, and one for each fire-side—
 Yours was a stranger's judgment: for historians,
 Commend me to these valleys!

1

. ten years back
 Close to those brother fountains, the huge crag

1800 to 1820.

² 1815.

Why, we have store of them; 1800.

* See note at end of the poem.

Leonard. Yet your Church-yard
 Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
 To say that you are heedless of the past :
 An orphan could not find his mother's grave :¹
 Here's neither head nor foot-stone, plate of brass,
 Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our earthly state
 Nor emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home
 Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

Priest. Why, there, Sir, is a thought that's new to me !
 The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread
 If every English church-yard were like ours ;
 Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth :
 We have no need of names and epitaphs ;
 We talk about the dead by our fire-sides.
 And then, for our immortal part ! *we* want
 No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :
 The thought of death sits easy on the man
 Who has been born and dies among the mountains.*

Leonard. Your Dalesmen, then, do in each other's thoughts
 Possess a kind of second life : no doubt
 You, Sir, could help me to the history
 Of half these graves ?

Priest. For eight-score winters past,²
 With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,
 Perhaps I might ; and, on a winter-evening,
 If you were seated at my chimney's nook,
 By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
 We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;
 Yet all in the broad highway of the world.
 Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it,—

¹ This line not in edition 1800.

² Not in edition 1800.

* See Note at end of the Poem.

It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man
Died broken-hearted.

Leonard. 'Tis a common case.
We'll take another : who is he that lies
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves ?
It touches on that piece of native rock
Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest. That's Walter Ewbank.
He had as white a head and fresh a cheek
As ever were produced by youth and age
Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.
Through five long generations had the heart
Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds
Of their inheritance, that single cottage—
You see it yonder ! and those few green fields.
They toiled and wrought, and still, from sire to son,
Each struggled, and each yielded as before
A little—yet a little,—and old Walter,
They left to him the family heart, and land
With other burthens than the crop it bore.
Year after year the old man still kept up
A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,
Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,
And went into his grave before his time.
Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurred him
God only knows, but to the very last
He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :
His pace was never that of an old man :
I almost see him tripping down the path
With his two grandsons after him :—but you,
Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,
Have far to travel,—and on these rough paths
Even in the longest day of midsummer—

Leonard. But those two Orphans !

Priest. Orphans !—Such they were—

And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed
 Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,
 Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,
 Would Leonard then, when elder boys remained
 At home, go staggering through the slippery fords,¹
 Bearing his brother on his back. I have seen him,
 On windy days, in one of those stray brooks,
 Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-leg deep,
 Their two books lying both on a dry stone,
 Upon the hither side : and once I said,
 As I remember, looking round these rocks
 And hills on which we all of us were born,
 That God who made the great book of the world
 Would bless such piety—

Leonard.

It may be then—

Priest. Never did worthier lads break English bread ;
 The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw,²
 With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,
 Could never keep those boys away from church,
 Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.
 Leonard and James ! I warrant, every corner
 Among these rocks, and every hollow place
 That venturous foot could reach, to one or both³
 Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.
 Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills ;
 They played like two young ravens on the crags :
 Then they could write, ay and speak too, as well
 As many of their betters—and for Leonard !

¹ 1836.

. when elder boys perhaps
 Remained at home, go staggering through the fords, 1800.

² 1836.

The finest Sunday that the Autumn saw, 1800.

³ 1836.

Where foot could come, to one or both of them 1800.

The very night before he went away,
 In my own house I put into his hand
 A bible, and I'd wager house and field ¹
 That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

Leonard. It seems, these Brothers have not lived to be
 A comfort to each other—

Priest. That they might
 Live to such end ² is what both old and young
 In this our valley all of us have wished,
 And what, for my part, I have often prayed :
 But Leonard—

Leonard. Then James still is left among you !

Priest. 'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking :
 They had an uncle ;—he was at that time
 A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas :
 And, but for that ³ same uncle, to this hour
 Leonard had never handled rope or shroud :
 For the boy loved the life which we lead here ;
 And though of unripe years, a stripling only, ⁴
 His soul was knit to this his native soil.
 But, as I said, old Walter was too weak
 To strive with such a torrent ; when he died,
 The estate and house were sold ; and all their sheep,
 A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
 Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years :—
 Well—all was gone, and they were destitute,

¹ 1827.

. . . and I'd wager twenty pounds 1800.

² 1815.

Live to that end . . . 1800.

³ 1815.

And but for this same uncle . . . 1800.

⁴ 1815.

And, though a very stripling, twelve years old, 1800.

And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,
 Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.
 Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.¹
 If there were one among us who had heard
 That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,
 From the Great Gavel,* down by Leeza's banks,
 And down the Enna, far as Egremont,
 The day would be a joyous festival;
 And those two bells of ours, which there you see—
 Hanging in the open air—but, O good Sir!
 This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him—
 Living or dead.—When last we heard of him,
 He was in slavery among the Moors
 Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a little
 That would bring down his spirit; and no doubt,
 Before it ended in his death, the Youth²
 Was sadly crossed.—Poor Leonard! when we parted,
 He took me by the hand, and said to me,
 If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,
 To live in peace upon his father's land,
 And lay his bones among us.³

¹ 1827.

'Tis now twelve years since we had tidings from him. 1800.

² 1815.

. the lad 1800.

³ 1836.

If ever the day came when he was rich,
 He would return, and in his Father's Land
 He would grow old among us. 1800.

* The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale: on issuing from the lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont. 1800.

Leonard. If that day
Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him ;
He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
As any that should meet him—

Priest. Happy ! Sir—

Leonard. You said his kindred all were in their graves,
And that he had one Brother—

Priest. That is but
A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth
James, though not sickly, yet was delicate ;
And Leonard being always by his side
Had done so many offices about him,
That, though he was not of a timid nature,
Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy
In him was somewhat checked : and, when his Brother
Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
The little colour that he had was soon
Stolen from his cheek ; he drooped, and pined, and pined—

Leonard. But these are all the graves of full-grown men !

Priest. Ay, Sir, that passed away : we took him to us ;
He was the child of all the dale—he lived
Three months with one, and six months with another ;
And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor love :
And many, many happy days were his.
But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief
His absent Brother still was at his heart.
And, when he dwelt¹ beneath our roof, we found
(A practice till this time unknown to him)
That often, rising from his bed at night,
He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping
He sought his brother Leonard.—You are moved !
Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,

¹ 1827.

. . . when he lived beneath

1800.

I judged you most unkindly.

Leonard.

But this Youth,

How did he die at last ?

Priest.

One sweet May-morning,

(It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)

He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,

With two or three companions, whom their course

Of occupation led from height to height

Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,

Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge

The humour of the moment, lagged behind.¹

You see yon precipice ;—it wears the shape

Of a vast building made of many crags ;²

And in the midst is one particular rock

That rises like a column from the vale,

Whence by our shepherds it is called THE PILLAR.

Upon its aëry summit crowned with heath,

The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades,

Lay stretched at ease ; but, passing by the place

On their return, they found that he was gone.

No ill was feared ; till one of them by chance

Entering, when evening was far spent, the house³

¹ 1820.

With two or three companions, whom it chanced
Some farther business summoned to a house
Which stands at the Dale-head. James, tired perhaps,
Or from some other cause remained behind. 1800.

² 1820.

. . . . it is — it almost looks
Like some vast building 1800.

³ 1827.

James, pointing to its summit, over which
They all had purposed to return together,
Informed them that he there would wait for them ;
They parted, and his comrades passed that way
Some two hours after, but they did not find him
At the appointed place, a circumstance

Which at that time was James's home, there learned
 That nobody had seen him all that day :
 The morning came, and still he ^{*} was unheard of :
 The neighbours were alarmed, and to the brook
 Some hastened ; some ran to the lake :¹ ere noon
 They found him at the foot of that same rock
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after
 I buried him, poor Youth,² and there he lies !

Leonard. And that then is his grave !—Before his death
 You ³ say that he saw many happy years ?

Priest. Ay, that he did—

Leonard. And all went well with him ?—

Priest. If he had one, the youth⁴ had twenty homes.

Leonard. And you believe, then, that his mind was
 easy ?—

Priest. Yes, long before he died, he found that time
 Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless
 His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless fortune,

Of which they took no heed ; but one of them
 Going by chance, at night, into the house 1800.

And told him that he there would wait for them,
 but they did not find him
 Upon the Pillar—at the appointed place. 1802.

Upon the Summit,—at the appointed place. 1815.

. they found that he was gone.
 From this no ill was feared ; but one of them
 Entering by chance, at eventide, the house 1820.

¹ 1836.

Some went, and some towards the lake : ere noon 1800.

Some hastened, some towards the lake . . . 1820.

² 1815.

. poor lad 1800.

³ 1820.

You said that he 1800.

⁴ 1815.

. . . the lad 1800.

He talked about him with a cheerful love.

Leonard. He could not come to an unhallowed end !

Priest. Nay, God forbid !—You recollect I mentioned
A habit which disquietude and grief
Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectured
That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
On the soft heath,¹ and, waiting for his comrades,
He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep
He to the margin of the precipice
Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong :
And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth
Fell, in his hand he must have grasp'd, we think,
His shepherd's staff ;² for on that Pillar of rock
It had been caught midway ;³ and there for years
It hung ;—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—

The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt
A gushing from his heart, that took away⁴
The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence ;⁵
And Leonard, when they reached the church-yard gate,
As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round,—
And, looking at the grave, he said, “ My Brother !”
The Vicar did not hear the words : and now,

¹ 1836. Upon the grass, and waiting 1800.

² 1836. at the time,
We guess, that in his hands he must have had
His shepherd's staff ; 1800.
. must have held 1827.

³ 1836. for, midway in the cliff
It had been caught, and there 1800.

⁴ Omitted in ed. 1800.

⁵ 1815. Tears rushing in ; both left the spot in silence, 1800.

He pointed towards his dwelling-place, entreating¹
 That Leonard would partake his homely fare :
 The other thanked him with an earnest voice ;²
 But added, that, the evening being calm,
 He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove
 That overhung the road : he there stopped short,
 And, sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed
 All that the Priest had said : his early years
 Were with him :—his long absence, cherished hopes,³
 And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
 All pressed on him with such a weight that now
 This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed
 A place in which he could not bear to live :
 So he relinquished all his purposes.
 He travelled back to Egremont :⁴ and thence,
 That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,⁵
 Reminding him of what had passed between them ;
 And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
 That it was from the weakness of his heart
 He had not dared to tell him who he was.

This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
 A Seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

¹ 1836.

Pointing towards the cottage he entreated, 1800.

² 1836.

. . . . with a fervent voice ; 1800.

³ 1836.

Were with him in his heart ; his cherished hopes, 1800.

⁴ 1836.

He travelled on to Egremont . . . 1800.

⁵ 1802.

That night, addressed a letter to the Priest, 1800.

Note to Page 112. The impressive circumstance here described actually took place some years ago in this country, upon an eminence called Kidstow Pike, one of the highest of the mountains that surround Hawes-

water. The summit of the pike was stricken by lightning ; and every trace of one of the fountains disappeared, while the other continued to flow as before. 1800.—Page 113. There is not anything more worthy of remark in the manners of the inhabitants of these mountains than the tranquillity, I might say indifference, with which they think and talk upon the subject of death. Some of the country churchyards, as here described, do not contain a single tombstone, and most of them have a very small number. 1800.

This poem, and the one that follows it, illustrate the way in which Wordsworth's imagination worked upon a minimum of facts, idealizing a simple story, and adding

the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream.

It is the only poem of his referring to Ennerdale ; but perhaps the chief association with that dale, to those who visit it after becoming acquainted with this poem, will be the fact that the brothers Ewbank were supposed to have spent their youth under the shadow of the Pillar, and Leonard to have had this conversation, on his return from sea, with the venerable priest of Ennerdale. The district is described with all that local accuracy which Wordsworth invariably shewed in idealization. The height whence James Ewbank is supposed to have fallen is not the Pillar-Rock—a crag somewhat difficult to ascend except by practised climbers, and which has only been accessible since mountaineering became an art and a passion to Englishmen. But, if we suppose, the conversation with the priest of Ennerdale to have taken place at the Bridge, below the Lake—as that is the only place where there is a hamlet and “a church-yard”—then the “precipice” will refer not to the Pillar “Rock,” but to the Pillar “*Mountain*.” Both are alluded to in the poem. The lines,

You see yon precipice, it almost looks
Like some vast building made of many crags ;
And in the midst is one particular rock
That rises like a column from the vale,
Whence by our shepherds it is called *the Pillar*,

are definite enough. The great mass of the Pillar Mountain is first referred to, and then the Rock which is a characteristic spur, half-way up the mountain on its northern side. The “airy summit crowned with heath,” however, on which “the loiterer” “lay stretched at ease,” could neither be the top of this “rock” nor the summit of the “mountain :” not the former, because there is no heath on it, and it would be impossible for a weary man, loitering behind his companions, to ascend it to rest, not the latter, because no one resting on the summit of the mountain could be “not unnoticed by his comrades,” and they would not pass that way over the top of the mountain “on their return” to Ennerdale. This is an instance, therefore, in which

precise localization is impossible. Probably Wordsworth did not know either that the pillar "rock" was bare on the summit, or that it was deemed inaccessible in 1800; and he idealized it to suit his imaginative purpose. In connection with this poem, his remark to the Hon. Mr Justice Coleridge may be recalled.* "He said there was some foundation in fact, however slight, for every poem he had written of a narrative kind; . . . 'The Brothers' was founded on a young shepherd, in his sleep, having fallen down a crag, his staff remaining suspended midway." It may be added that the character of Leonard Ewbank was drawn in large part from that of the poet's brother John.—ED.

MICHAEL.

A PASTORAL POEM.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Written at the Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as "The Brothers." The sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north.]

If from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
You will suppose that with an upright path
Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
But, courage! for around ¹ that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone ²
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites

¹ 1827.

. . . . for around that boisterous Brook 1800.

² 1827.

No habitation there is seen; but such
As journey thither * 1800.

* See *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 305. Ed.

That overhead are sailing in the sky.
 It is in truth an utter solitude ;
 Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
 But for one object which you might pass by,
 Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones :¹
 And to that simple object appertains
 A story—unenriched with strange events,
 Yet not unfit,² I deem, for the fireside,
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me³
 Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
 Whom I already loved :—not verily
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
 Where was their occupation and abode.
 And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency
 Of natural objects, led me on to feel
 For passions that were not my own, and think
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.
 Therefore, although it be a history
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
 Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

¹ 1827.

There is a straggling heap 1800.

² 1836.

And to that place a story appertains,
 Which, though it be ungarnished with events,
 Is not unfit, I deem 1800.

³ 1827.

The earliest of those tales that spake to me 1800.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;
 An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
 And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
 And watchful more than ordinary men.
 Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
 Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,
 When others heeded not, he heard the South
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
 "The winds are now devising work for me !"
 And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
 That came to him, and left him, on the heights.
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
 And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
 The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step
 He had so often climbed ;¹ which had impressed
 So many incidents upon his mind
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory

¹ 1836.

. . . the hills, which he so oft
 Had climbed with vigorous steps . . .

Of the dumb animals whom he had sawed,
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
 The certainty of honourable gain ;
 Those fields, those hills—what could they less ?—had laid :
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
 His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—²
 Though younger than himself full twenty years.
 She was a woman of a stirring life,
 Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had
 Of antique form ; this large, for spinning wool ;
 That small, for flax ; and if one wheel had rest
 It was because the other was at work.
 The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
 An only Child, who had been born to them
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
 To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,
 With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
 The one of an inestimable worth,
 Made all their household. I may truly say
 That they were as a proverb in the vale
 For endless industry. When day was gone,

* ¹ 1827.

liking to such acts,
 So grateful in themselves, the certainty
 Of honourable gains ; these fields, these hills
 Which were his living Being, even more
 Than his own Blood—what could they less ? had laid

1800.

² 1815.

He had a wife, a comely matron, old,

1800.

And from their occupations out of doors
 The Son and Father were come home, even then,
 Their labour did not cease; unless when all
 Turned to the ¹ cleanly supper-board, and there,
 Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,
 Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the ² meal
 Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
 And his old Father both betook themselves
 To such convenient work as might employ
 Their hands by the fire-side; perhaps to card
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
 That in our ancient uncouth country style
 With huge and black projection overbrowed ³
 Large space beneath, as duly as the light
 Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp;
 An aged utensil, which had performed
 Service beyond all others of its kind.
 Early at evening did it burn—and late,
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
 Which, going by from year to year, had found,
 And left the couple neither gay perhaps
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
 Living a life of eager industry.

¹ 1836.

. . . their cleanly supper-board, . . .

1800.

² 1836.

. their meal

1800.

³ 1836.

Did with a huge projection overbrow

1800.

And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year ¹
 There by the light of this old lamp they sate,
 Father and Son, while far ² into the night
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
 Making the cottage through the silent hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.³
 This light ⁴ was famous in its neighbourhood,
 And was a public symbol of the life
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and south, *
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
 And westward to the village near the lake ;
 And from this constant light, so regular
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years,
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more dear—

1827.

. . . when Luke was in his eighteenth year, 1800.

1896.

* . . . while late into the night 1800.

Not with a waste of words, but for the sake
 Of pleasure, which I know that I shall give
 To many living now, I of this lamp
 Speak thus minutely : for there are not few
 Whose memories will bear witness to my tale.

•

In edd. 1800 and 1802.

1815.

The light 1800.

Less from instinctive tenderness,¹ the same
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—²
 Than that a child,³ more than all other gifts
 That earth can offer to declining man,⁴
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they
 By tendency of nature needs must fail.⁵
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
 His heart and his heart's joy! For oftentimes
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone
 For pastime⁶ and delight, as is the use
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
 To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
 His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.⁷

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
 Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he

¹ 1827.

Effect which might perhaps have been produced
 By that instinctive tenderness, ... 1800.

² 1836.

. the same
 Blind Spirit, which is in the blood of all— 1800.

³ 1827.

Or that a child, ... 1800.

⁴

This line inserted in 1836, and subsequent edd.

⁵

From such, and other causes, to the thoughts
 Of the old man, his only son was now
 The dearest object that he knew on earth. 1800 to 1820.

⁶ 1827.

For dalliance and delight, ... 1800.

⁷ 1836.

His cradle, with a woman's gentle hand. 1800.

* Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
 Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched
 Under the large old oak, that near his door
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,¹
 Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called
 The CLIPPING TREE,* a name which yet it bears.
 There while they two were sitting in the shade,
 With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
 Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
 A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
 Two steady roses that were five years old;
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
 With iron, making it throughout in all
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
 And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipt
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
 And, to his office prematurely called,
 There stood the urchin, as you will divine,

¹ 1836.

. when he
 Had work by his own door, or when he sate
 With sheep before him on his shepherd's stool
 Beneath that large old oak, which near their door
 Stood, and from its enormous breadth of shade. 1800.

* Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing. 1800.

Something between a hindrance and a help ;
 And for this cause not always, I believe,
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;
 Though nought was left undone which staff, or voice,
 Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.

But soon, as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
 Against the mountain blasts, and to the heights,
 Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
 He with his Father daily went, and they
 Were as companions, why should I relate
 That objects which the Shepherd loved before
 Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came
 Feelings and emanations—things which were
 Light to the sun and music to the wind :
 And that the old Man's heart seemed born again ?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :
 And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
 He was his comfort and his daily hope.¹

While in this sort the simple household lived
 From day to day,² to Michael's ear there came
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound
 In surety for his brother's son, a man
 Of an industrious life, and ample means ;

¹ The lines from "Though nought was left," to "daily hope"
 omitted in 1800.

² 1815.

While this good household thus were living on
 From day to day, ... 1800.

While in this fashion which I have described
 This simple household thus were living on
 From day to day, ... 1802.

But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
 Had ~~rest~~ upon him; and old Michael now
 Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
 A grievous penalty, but little less
 Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
 At the first hearing, for a moment took
 More hope out of his life than he supposed
 That any old man ever could have lost.
 As soon as he had armed himself with strength
 To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
 The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once ¹
 A portion of his patrimonial fields.
 Such was his first resolve; he thought again,
 And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,
 Two evenings after he had heard the news,
 "I have been toiling more than seventy years,
 And in the open sunshine of God's love
 Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours
 Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
 Our lot is a hard lot: the sun himself ²
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I;
 And I have lived to be a fool at last
 To my own family. An evil man
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he
 Were false to us; and if he were not false,
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like this

1836.

As soon as he had gathered so much strength
 That he could look his trouble in the face,
 It seemed that his sole refuge was to sell

1800.

1827.

. . . . the sun itself

1800.

Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—but
 'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
 Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind
 That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
 Another kinsman—he will be our friend
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go,
 And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift
 He quickly will repair this loss, and then
 He may return to us.¹ If here he stay,
 What can be done ? Where every one is poor,
 What can be gained ?”

At this the old Man paused,
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
 Was busy, looking back into past times.
 There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
 He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
 They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence
 And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours bought
 A basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares ;
 And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
 Went up to London, found a master there,
 Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
 To go and overlook his merchandise
 Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,
 And left estates and monies to the poor,

¹ 1836.

And, at his birth-place, built a chapel, floored
With marble, which he sent from foreign lands.*
These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
And her face brightened. The old Man was glad,
And thus resumed :—" Well, Isabel ! this scheme
These two days, has been meat and drink to me.
Far more than we have lost is left us yet. *
—We have enough—I wish indeed that I
Were younger ;—but this hope is a good hope.
—Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best
Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night :
—If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
Was restless morn and night, and all day long
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son.
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work : for, when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the last two nights
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep :
And when they rose at morning she could see
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
Were sitting at the door, " Thou must not go :
We have no other Child but thee to lose,
None to remember—do not go away,
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."
The Youth made answer with a jocund voice ;

* See note at end of this poem. 1800.

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart. That evening her best fare
Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length
The expected letter from their kinsman came,
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
To which, requests were added, that forthwith
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbours round
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
Hark to her house returned, the old Man said,
"He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
The Housewife answered, talking much of things
Which, if at such short notice he should go,
Would surely be forgotten. But at length
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheep-fold; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge ²

¹ 1820.

Next morning Isabel resumed her work;

1800.

² 1816.

. . . which close to the brook side

1800.

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
 With Luke that evening thitherward he walked :
 And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,
 And thus the old Man spake to him :—" My Son,
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
 I will relate to thee some little part
 Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good
 When thou art from me, even if I should touch¹
 On things thou canst not know of.—After thou
 First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls²
 To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away
 Two days, and blessings from thy Father's tongue
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
 Than when I heard thee by our own fire-side
 First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;
 While thou,³ a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
 Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,
 And in the open fields my life was passed
 And on the mountains ; else I think that thou
 Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
 But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,
 As well thou knowest, in us the old and young

¹ 1836.

. even if I should speak
 Of things

1800.

² 1827.

. as it befalls

1800.

³ 1836.

When thou

1800.

Have played together, nor with me didst thou
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."
 Luke had a manly heart; but at these words
 He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand.
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see
 That these are things of which I need not speak.
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee
 A kind and a good Father: and herein
 I but repay a gift which I myself
 Received at others' hands; for, though now old
 Beyond the common life of man, I still
 Remember them who loved me in my youth.
 Both of them sleep together: here they lived,
 As all their Forefathers had done; and when
 At length their time was come, they were not loth
 To give their bodies to the family mould.
 I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived:
 But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
 And see so little gain from threescore years.¹
 These fields were burthened when they came to me;
 Till I was forty years of age, not more
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.
 I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my work,
 And till these three weeks past the land was free.
 —It looks as if it never could endure
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
 That thou should'st go."

At this the old man paused;
 Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:
 "This was a work for us; and now, my Son,

¹ 1827.

from sixty years.

1800.

It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both may live
 To see a better day. At eighty-four
 I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy part ;
 I will do mine.—I will begin again
 With many tasks that were resigned to thee :
 Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
 Will I without thee go again, and do
 All works which I was wont to do alone,
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, Boy !
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
 With many hopes ; it should be so—yes—yes—
 I knew that thou couldst never have a wish
 To leave me, Luke : thou hast been bound to me
 Only by links of love : when thou art gone,
 What will be left to us !—But, I forget
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,
 When thou art gone away, should evil men
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,
 And God will strengthen thee : amid all fear
 And all temptations, Luke, I pray that thou
 Mayst bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived,¹
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—
 When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
 A work which is not here : a covenant

¹ 1802.

. should evil men
 Be thy companions, let this Sheep-fold be
 Thy anchor and thy shield ; amid all fear
 And all temptation, let it be to thee
 An emblem of the life thy Fathers lived,

'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate
 Befal thee, I shall love thee to the last,
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down,
 And, as his Father had requested, laid
 The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight
 The old Man's grief broke from him ; to his heart
 He pressed his Son, he kissèd him and wept ;
 And to the house together they returned.
 —Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,¹
 Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn the Boy ²
 Began his journey, and when he had reached
 The public way, he put on a bold face ;
 And all the neighbours, as he passed their doors,
 Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
 That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
 Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,¹
 Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout
 "The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
 Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
 So, many months passed on ; and once again
 The Shepherd went about his daily work
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now
 Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
 He to that valley took his way, and there
 Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began
 To slacken in his duty ; and at length,

¹ In ed. 1815, and onward.

² 1815.

He in the dissolute city gave himself
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
 'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
 Would overset the brain, or break the heart :¹
 I have conversed with more than one who well
 Remember the old Man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
 He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,²
 And listened to the wind ; and, as before,
 Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,
 And for the land, his small inheritance.
 And to that hollow dell from time to time
 Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
 The pity which was then in every heart
 For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
 That many and many a day he thither went,
 And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes was he seen
 Sitting alone, or with³ his faithful Dog,
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
 The length of full seven years, from time to time,
 He at the building of this Sheep-fold wrought,

¹ 1820.

Would break the heart :—old Michael found it so. 1800.

² 1836.

. . and still looked up upon the sun, 1800.

. . and still looked up toward the sun, 1832.

³ 1836.

. . . with that his faithful dog 1800.

And left the work unfinished when he died.
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel
 Survive her husband: at her death the estate
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
 The Cottage which was named the EVENING STAR
 Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground
 On which it stood; great changes have been wrought
 In all the neighbourhood:—yet the oak is left
 That grew beside their door; and the remains
 Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
 Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

NOTES.—“*There's Richard Bateman, &c.* The story alluded to here is well known in the country. The chapel is called Ings Chapel, and is on the right-hand side of the road leading from Kendal to Ambleside.”

The above is Wordsworth's note to edd. 1800 and 1802. Ings chapel is in the parish of Kendal, about two miles east of Windermere. The following extract from Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary* further explains the allusion in the poem:—“*Hugil*, a chapelry six and a quarter miles from Kendal. The chapel, rebuilt in 1743 by Robert Bateman, stands in the village of Ings, which is in this chapelry. The free school was endowed with land in 1650 by Roland Wilson, producing at present £12 per annum. The average number of boys is twenty-five. This endowment was augmented by £8 per annum by Robert Bateman, who gave £1000 for purchasing an estate, and erected eight alms-houses for as many poor families, besides a donation of £12 per annum to the curate. This worthy benefactor was born here, and from a state of indigence succeeded in amassing considerable wealth by mercantile pursuits. He is stated to have been poisoned, in the straits of Gibraltar, on his voyage from Leghorn, with a valuable cargo, by the captain of the vessel.” (See the “*Topographical Dictionary of England*,” by Samuel Lewis, vol. ii., p. 1831.)

From the Fenwick note it will be seen that Michael's sheep-fold in Green-head Ghyll existed, at least the remains of it, in 1843. Its site, however, is now somewhat difficult to identify. There is a sheep-fold above Boon Beck, which one passes immediately on entering the common, going up Green-head Ghyll. It is now “finished,” and used when required. There are remains of walling much higher up the ghyll, but these are probably the work of miners formerly engaged there. Michael's cottage had been destroyed when the poem was written in 1800. It stood where the coach-house and stables of “the Hollins” now stand. But any one visiting Green-head ghyll, and wishing to realise Michael in his old age, as described in this poem

should ascend the ghyll till it approaches the top of Fairfield, where the old man, during eighty years,

had learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone,

and where he

had been alone,
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the heights.

By so doing he will be better able to realize the spirit of the poem, than by trying to identify the site either of the "unfinished sheep-fold," or of the house named the "evening star." What Wordsworth said to the Hon. Mr Justice Coleridge in reference to *The Brothers* has been quoted in the note to that poem. On the same occasion he remarked, in reference to *Michael*:—"Michael" was founded on the son of an old couple having become dissolute, and run away from his parents; and on an old shepherd having been seven years in building up a sheep-fold in a solitary valley."—*Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 305.

The following extracts from Dorothy Wordsworth's journal, show the carefulness with which the poem "Michael" was composed, and the frequent revisions it underwent:—

Oct. 11, [1800.] "We walked up Green-head ghyll in search of a sheep-fold. . . . The sheepfold is falling away. It is built nearly in the form of a heart unequally divided."

13. "William composing in the evening."

15. "W. composed a little." . . . "W. again composed at the sheepfold after dinner."

18. "W. worked all the morning at the sheepfold, but in vain. He lay down till 7 o'clock, but did not sleep."

19. "William got to work."

20. "W. worked in the morning at the sheepfold."

21. "W. had been unsuccessful in the morning at the sheepfold."

22. "W. composed, without much success at the sheepfold."

23. "W. was not successful in composition in the evening."

24. "W. was only partly successful in composition."

26. "W. composed a good deal all the morning."

28. "W. could not compose much; fatigued himself with altering."

30. "W. worked at his poem all the morning."

Nov. 10. "W. at the sheepfold."

12. "W. has been working at the sheepfold."

Dec. 9. "W. finished his poem to-day."

It is impossible to say with certainty that the entry under Dec. 9 refers to "Michael," but it is most probable that it does so; and, if this be correct, we see that Wordsworth wrought continuously at the poem for nearly two months.—Ed.

THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS;

OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE.*

A PASTORAL.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I will only add a little monitory anecdote concerning this subject. When Coleridge and Southey were walking together upon the Fells, Southey observed that, if I wished to be considered a faithful painter of rural manners, I ought not to have said that my shepherd-boys trimmed their rustic hats as described in the poem. Just as the words had passed his lips two boys appeared with the very plant entwined round their hats. I have often wondered that Southey, who rambled so much about the mountains, should have fallen into this mistake, and I record it as a warning for others who, with far less opportunity than my dear friend had of knowing what things are, and far less sagacity, give way to presumptuous criticism, from which he was free, though in this matter mistaken. In describing a tarn under Helvellyn I say—

“There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer.”

This was branded by a critic of these days, in a review ascribed to Mrs Barbauld, as unnatural and absurd. I admire the genius of Mrs Barbauld and am certain that, had her education been favourable to imaginative influences, no female of her day would have been more likely to sympathize with that image, and to acknowledge the truth of the sentiment.]

THE valley rings with mirth and joy ;
Among the hills the echoes play
A never never ending song,
To welcome in the May.
The magpie chatters with delight ;
The mountain raven's youngling brood
Have left the mother and the nest ;
And they go rambling east and west
In search of their own food ;
Or through the glittering vapours dart
In very wantonness of heart.

* *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall. 1800.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
 Two boys are sitting in the sun ;
 Their work, if any work they have,
 Is out of mind—or done.
 On pipes of sycamore they play
 The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;
 Or with that plant which in our dale
 We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,
 Their rustic hats they trim :
 And thus, as happy as the day,
 Those shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge
 The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;
 The thrush is busy in the wood,
 And carols loud and strong,
 A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
 All newly born ! both earth and sky
 Keep jubilee, and more than all,
 Those boys with their green coronal ;
 They never hear the cry,
 That plaintive cry ! which up the hill
 Comes from the depths of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
 "Down to the stump of yon old yew
 We'll for our whistles run a race."¹
 —Away the shepherds flew ;
 They leapt—they ran—and when they came
 Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
 Seeing that he should lose the prize,
 "Stop !" to his comrade Walter cries—
 James stopped with no good will :

¹ 1806.

I'll run with you a race"—no more.

1800.

"We'll for this whistle run a race"

1802.

Said Walter then, exulting ; “ Here
You’ll find a task for half a year.¹

Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and tread where I shall tread.”²
The other took him at his word,
And followed as he led.³
It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go ;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :
The gulf is deep below ;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft
The challenger pursued his march ;⁴
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
The middle of the arch.

When list ! he hears a piteous moan—

1836.

Said Walter then, “ Your task is here,
’Twill keep you working half a year.
’Twill baffle you for half a year.

1800.

1827.

1836.

Till you have crossed where I shall cross
Say that you’ll neither sleep nor eat.”

1800.

Now cross where I shall cross,—come on
And follow me where I shall lead.”

1802.

Come, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and in my footsteps tread.”

1832.

1832.

James proudly took him at his word,
But did not like the feat.
But did not like the deed.
The other took him at his word,
But did not like the deed.

1800.

1802.

1815.

1827.

. began his march ;

1800

Again!—his heart within him dies—
 His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
 He totters, pallid as a ghost,¹
 And, looking down, espies²
 A lamb, that in the pool is pent
 Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
 And safe without a bruise or wound
 The cataract had borne him down
 Into the gulf profound.
 His dam had seen him when he fell,
 She saw him down the torrent borne;
 And, while with all a mother's love
 She from the lofty rocks above
 Sent forth a cry forlorn,
 The lamb, still swimming round and round,
 Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
 That sent this rueful cry; I ween
 The Boy recovered heart, and told
 The sight which he had seen.
 Both gladly now deferred their task;
 Nor was there wanting other aid—
 A Poet, one who loves the brooks
 Far better than the sages' books,
 By chance had thither strayed;
 And there the helpless lamb he found
 By those huge rocks encompassed round.

¹ 1827.

. pale as any ghost, 1800.

² 1827.

. he spies 1800.

He drew it from the troubled pool,¹
 And brought it forth into the light;
 The Shepherds met him with his charge,
 An unexpected sight!
 Into their arms the lamb they took,
 Whose life and limbs the flood had spared;²
 Then up the steep ascent they hied,
 And placed him at his mother's side;
 And gently did the Bard
 Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,
 And bade them better mind their trade.

It will be seen, from the various readings, that *The Idle Shepherd-Boys* reached its final form in 1836. The alterations of 1827 and 1836 were all improvements. The "bridge of rock" across Dungeon-Ghyll "chasm," and the "lofty waterfall," with all its accessories of place as described in the poem remain as they were in 1800.—ED.

THE PET-LAMB.

A PASTORAL.

Comp. 1800. — Pub 1800.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Barbara Lewthwaite, now living at Ambleside (1843), though much changed as to beauty, was one of two most lovely sisters. Almost the first words my poor brother John said, when he visited us for the first time at Grasmere, were, "Were those two Angels that I have just seen?" and from his description, I have no doubt they were those two sisters. The mother died in child-bed; and one of our neighbours at Grasmere told me that the loveliest sight she had ever seen was that mother as she lay in her coffin with her babe in her arm. I mention this to notice what I cannot but think a salutary custom once universal in these vales. Every attendant on a funeral made it a duty to look at the corpse in the coffin before the lid was closed, which was never done (nor I believe is now) till a minute or two before the corpse was removed. Barbara Lewthwaite was not in fact the child whom I had seen and overheard as described in the

¹ 1836.

He drew it gently from the pool

• 1800.

² 1836.

Said they, "He's neither maimed nor scarred;"

1800.

poem. I ~~change~~ the name for reasons implied in the above ; and here will add a caution against the use of names of living persons. Within a few months after the publication of this poem, I was much surprised, and more hurt, to find it in a child's school book, which, having been compiled by Lindley Murray, had come into use at Grasmere School where Barbara was a pupil ; and, alas ! I had the mortification of hearing that she was very vain of being thus distinguished ; and, in after life she used to say that she remembered the incident, and what I said to her upon the occasion.]

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink ;
I heard a voice ; it said, " Drink, pretty creature, drink !"
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
A snow-white mountain-lamb with a Maiden at its side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near ;¹ the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone ;
With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden kneel,
While to that mountain-lamb she gave its evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper took,
Seemed to feast with head and ears ; and 'his tail with
pleasure shook.

" Drink, pretty creature, drink," she said in such a tone
That I almost received her heart into my own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty rare !
I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.
Now with her empty can the maiden turned away :
But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked : and from a shady place
I unobserved could see the workings of her face :

¹ 1836.

No other sheep were near ; 1800.

² 1836.

Towards the lamb she looked, and from that shady place
1800.

If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers bring,
Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little Maid might sing ;¹

“ What ails thee, young One ? what ? Why pull so at thy cord ?
Is it not well with thee ? well both for bed and board ?
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be ;
Rest, little young One, rest ; what is't that aileth thee ?

What is it thou wouldst seek ? what is wanting to thy heart ?
Thy limbs are they not strong ? And beautiful thou art :
This grass is tender grass ; these flowers they have no peers ;
And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears !

If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen chain,
This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain ;
For rain and mountain-storms ! the like thou need'st not fear,
The rain and storm are things that scarcely can come here.

Rest, little young One, rest ; thou hast forgot the day
When my father found thee first in places far away ;
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned by none,
And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee home :
A blessed day for thee ! then whither wouldst thou roam ?
A faithful nurse thou hast ; the dam that did thee yearn
Upon the mountain tops no kinder could have been.

Thou know'st that twice a day I have brought thee in this can
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran ;
And twice in the day, when the ground is wet with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is and new.

Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they are now,
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the plough ;

¹ 1802

. would sing ;

1800.

My playmate thou shalt be ; and when the wind is cold
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be thy fold.

It will not, will not rest !—Poor creature, can it be
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is working so in thee ?
Things that I know not of belike to thee are dear,
And dreams of things which thou canst neither see nor hear.

Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green and fair !
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness that come there ;
The little brooks that seem all pastime and all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions for their prey.

Here thou need'st not dread the raven in the sky ;
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage is hard by.¹
Why bleat so after me ? Why pull so at thy chain ?
Sleep—and at break of day I will come to thee again !"².

—As homeward through the lane I went with lazy feet,
This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat ;
And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line,
That but half of it was hers, and one half of it was *mine*.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the song ;
"Nay," said I, "more than half to the damsel must belong,
For she looked with such a look, and she spake with such a
tone,
That I almost received her heart into my own."

¹ 1802.

He will not come to thee,—our cottage is hard by. 1800.

² 1802.

Night and day thou art safe, as living thing can be,
Be happy then and rest, what is't that aileth thee. 1800.

The text of this ballad underwent scarcely any alteration after 1802, in which year three slight changes were made on the original of 1800.—ED.

POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

IT WAS AN APRIL MORNING: FRESH AND CLEAR.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Written at Grasmere. This poem was suggested on the banks of the brook that runs through Easdale, which is, in some parts of its course, as wild and beautiful as brook can be. I have composed thousands of verses by the side of it.]

It was an April morning: fresh and clear,
 The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
 Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the voice
 Of waters which the winter had supplied
 Was softened down into a vernal tone.
 The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
 And hopes and wishes, from all living things
 Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
 The budding groves seemed eager to urge on
 The steps of June;¹ as if their various hues
 Were only hindrances that stood between
 Them and their object:² but, meanwhile, prevailed.

¹ 1845.

The budding groves appeared as if in haste
 To spur the steps of June.

1800.

² 1845.

. as if their shades
 Of *various* green were hindrances that stood
 Between them and their object; . . .

1800.

Such an entire contentment in the air¹
 That every naked ash, and tardy tree
 Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance²
 With which it looked on this delightful day
 Were native to the summer.—Up the brook
 I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
 Alive to all things and forgetting all.
 At length I to a sudden turning came
 In this continuous glen, where down a rock
 The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
 Sent forth such sallies of glad sound that all
 Which I till then had heard, appeared the voice
 Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the lamb,
 The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush
 Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,
 Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
 Or like some natural produce of the air,
 That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here;
 But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the birch,
 The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
 With hanging islands of resplendent furze:
 And, on a summit, distant a short space,
 By any who should look beyond the dell,
 A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
 I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
 “Our thoughts at least are ours; and this wild nook,
 My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee.”
 —Soon did the spot become my other home,
 My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.

¹ 1845.

. ; yet, meanwhile,
 There was such deep contentment in the air 1900.

² 1815.

. seemed as though the countenance 1800.

And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
Years after we are gone and in our graves,
When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

The text of the "Poems on the Naming of Places" underwent comparatively little alteration in successive editions. All the changes in the first poem were made in 1845. In other words, it remained untouched, from the year in which it was composed and first published, till the last issue of his works which Wordsworth personally superintended. From the Fenwick note, it is evident that 'the Rivulet' was Easdale beck. But where was 'Emma's Dell?' In the autumn of 1877, Dr Cradock, the Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, took me to a place, of which he afterwards wrote, "I have a fancy for a spot just beyond Goody Bridge to the left, where the brook makes a curve, and returns to the road two hundred yards farther on. But I have not discovered a trace of authority in favour of the idea farther than that the wooded bend of the brook with the stepping stones across it, connected with a field-path recently stopped, was a very favourite haunt of Wordsworth's. At the upper part of this bend, near to the place where the brook returns to the road, is a deep pool at the foot of a rush of water. In this pool, a man named Wilson was drowned many years ago. He lived at a house on the hill called Score Crag, which, if my conjecture as to Emma's Dell is right, is the 'single mountain cottage' on a 'summit, distant a short space.' Wordsworth, happening to be walking at no great distance, heard a loud shriek. It was that of Mr Wilson, the father, who had just discovered his son's body in the beck."

In the *Reminiscences** of the poet, by the Hon. Mr Justice Coleridge, there is a record of a walk they took up Easdale to this place, entering the field just at the spot which Dr Cradock supposes to be 'Emma's Dell.' "He turned aside at a little farm-house, and took us into a swelling field to look down on the tumbling stream which bounded it, and which we saw precipitated at a distance, in a broad white sheet, from the mountain." (This refers to Easdale Force). Then, as he mused for an instant, he said, "I have often thought what a solemn thing it would be could we have brought to our mind at once all the scenes of distress and misery which any spot, however beautiful and calm before us, has been witness to since the beginning. That water break, with the glassy quiet pool beneath it, that looks so lovely, and presents no images to the mind but of peace—there, I remember, the only son of his

* Contributed to the *Memoirs*, vol. ii., pp. 300-315.

father, a poor man who lived yonder, was drowned." This walk and conversation took place in October 1836. If any one is surprised that Wordsworth, supposing him to have been then looking into the very dell on which he wrote the above poem in 1800, did not name it to Mr Coleridge, he must remember that he was not in the habit of speaking of the places he had memorialised in verse, and that in 1836 his 'Sister Emmeline' had for a year been a confirmed invalid at Rydal. I have repeatedly followed Easdale beck all the way up from its junction with the Rothay to the Tarn, and found no spot corresponding so closely to the realistic detail of this poem as the one suggested by Dr Cradock. There are two places further up the dale where "such sallies of glad sound" as are referred to are audible, but they are not at "a sudden turning," as is the spot above Goody Bridge. If one leaves the Easdale road at this bridge, and keeps to the side of the beck for a few hundred yards, till he reaches the sudden turning,—especially if it be a bright April morning, such as that described in the poem,—and remember that this path by the brook was a favourite resort of Wordsworth and his sister, the probability of Dr Cradock's suggestion will be apparent. Lady Richardson, who knew the place, and appreciated the poem as thoroughly as any of Wordsworth's friends, told me that she concurred in this identification of the 'dell.'—ED.

TO JOANNA.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Written at Grasmere. The effect of her laugh is an extravagance, though the effect of the reverberation of voices in some parts of the mountains is very striking. There is, in "The Excursion," an allusion to the bleat of a lamb thus re-echoed, and described without any exaggeration, as I heard it, on the side of Stickle Tarn, from the precipice that stretches on to Langdale Pikes.]

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
The time of early youth;¹ and there you learned,
From years of quiet industry, to love
The living Beings by your own fireside,
With such a strong devotion that your heart
Is slow to meet the sympathies of them²

¹ 1827.

Your time of early youth; 1800.

² 1836.

Is slow towards the sympathies of them 1800.

Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
 And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.
 Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,
 Dwelling retired in our simplicity
 Among the woods and fields, we love you well,
 Joanna! and I guess, since you have been
 So distant from us now for two long years,
 That you will gladly listen to discourse,
 However trivial, if you thence be taught¹
 That they, with whom you once were happy, talk
 Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days past,
 Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
 Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-tower,
 The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by
 Came forth to greet me; and when he had asked,
 "How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted Maid!
 And when will she return to us?" he paused;
 And, after short exchange of village news,
 He with grave looks demanded, for what cause,
 Reviving obsolete idolatry,
 I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
 Of formidable size had chiselled out
 Some uncouth name upon the native rock,
 Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.
 —Now, by those dear immunities of heart
 Engendered between malice and true love,
 I was not loth to be so catechised,
 And this was my reply:—"As it befel,
 One summer morning we had walked abroad
 At break of day, Joanna and myself.

¹ 1838.

if you thence are taught

1800.

—'Twas that delightful season when the broom,
 Full-flowered, and visible in every steep,
 Along the copses runs in veins of gold.
 Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks ;
 And when we came in front of that tall rock
 That eastward looks, I there stopped short—and stood¹
 Tracing² the lofty barrier with my eye
 From base to summit ; such delight I found
 To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower,
 That intermixture of delicious hues,
 Along so vast a surface, all at once,
 In one impression, by connecting force
 Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.
 —When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
 Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
 That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
 The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
 Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed again ;
 That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
 Was ready with her cavern ; Hammar-scar,
 And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth
 A noise of laughter ; southern Loughrigg heard,
 And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone ;
 Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
 Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw blew
 His speaking-trumpet ;—back out of the clouds
 Of Glaramara southward came the voice ;
 And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head.
 —Now whether (said I to our cordial Friend,
 Who in the hey-day of astonishment

¹ 1886.

Which looks towards the east, I then stopped short 1800.

² 1836.

And traced 1800.

Smiled in my face) this were in simple truth
 A work accomplished by the brotherhood
 Of ancient mountains, or my ear was touched
 With dreams and visionary impulses
 To me alone imparted,¹ sure I am
 That there was a loud uproar in the hills.
 And, while we both were listening, to my side
 The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished
 To shelter from some object of her fear.
 —And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen moons
 Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
 And silent morning, I sat down, and there,
 In memory of affections old and true,
 I chiselled out in those rude characters
 Joanna's name deep² in the living stone :—
 And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,
 Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S ROCK."

NOTE.—In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of time, and the rudeness of the workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic. They are without doubt Roman.

The Rotha, mentioned in this poem, is the river which, flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Rydale, falls into Wynandermere. On Helmerag, that impressive single mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock which from most points of view bears a striking resemblance to an old woman cowering. Close by this rock is one of those fissures or caverns which in the language of the country are called dungeons. Most of the mountains here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Grasmere ; of the others, some are at a considerable distance, but they belong to the same cluster. 1800.

Most of the changes introduced into the text of this poem were made in the year 1836.

The place where the echo of the bleat of the lamb was heard—referred to in the Fenwick note—may be easily found near the foot of Pike

¹ 1827.

Is not for me to tell ; but sure I am

1800.

² 1845.

Joanna's name upon the living stone

1800.

O'Stickle. "The lofty firs, that overtop their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-tower,' stood by the roadside, scarcely twenty yards north-west from the steeple of Grasmere church. Their site is now included in the road, which has been widened at that point. They were Scotch firs of unusual size, and might justly be said to 'overtop their neighbour' the tower. Mr Fleming Green, who well remembers the trees, gave me this information, which is confirmed by other inhabitants. When the road was enlarged, not many years ago, the roots of the trees were found by the workmen." (Dr Cradock to the editor). The

tall rock

That eastward looks,

by the banks of the Rotha, presenting a "lofty barrier" "from base to summit," is manifestly a portion of Helmcrag. It is impossible to know whether Wordsworth carved Joanna Hutchinson's name anywhere on Helmcrag, and it is useless to enquire. If he did so, the discovery of the place would not help any one to understand or appreciate the poem. It is obvious that he did not intend to be literally exact in details, as the poem was written in 1800, and addressed to Joanna Hutchinson,—who is spoken of as having been absent from Grasmere "for two long years;" and Wordsworth says that he carved the Runic characters *in memoriam* eighteen months after that summer morning when he heard the echo of her laughter. But the family only took up residence at Grasmere in December 1799, and the "poems on the naming of places" were published before the close of 1800. The effect of these lines to Joanna, however, is certainly not impaired—it may even be enhanced—by our inability to localise them. Only one in the list of places referred to can occasion any perplexity, viz., Hammar-scar, since it is a name now disused in the district. It used to be applied to some rocks on the flank of Silver-how, to the wood around them, and also to the gorge between Silver-how and Lough-rigg. Hammar, from the old Norse *hamar*, signifies a steep broken rock.

The imaginative description of the echo of the lady's laugh suggests a parallel passage from Michael Drayton's *Polyolbion*, which Wordsworth must doubtless have read. (See his sister's reference to Drayton in the Journal of the Scotch Tour; note to poem, *At the grave of Burns*.)

Which *Copland* scarce had spoke, but quickly every Hill
Upon her verge that stands, the neighbouring valleys fill;
Helvillon from his height, it through the mountains threw,
From whence as soon again, the sound *Dunbalsase* drew,
From whose stone-trophed head, it on the *Wendrosse* went,
Which tow'rds the sea again, resounded it to *Dent*,
That *Brodwater* therewith within her banks astound,
In sailing to the sea, told it to *Egremound*,
Whose buildings, walks, and streets, with echoes loud and long,
Did mightily commend old *Copland* for her song.

Polyolbion, The Thirtieth Song, l. 155-164.

Anyone who compares this passage with Wordsworth's *Joanna* will see the difference between the elaborate fancy of a topographical narrator, and the vivid imagination of a poetic idealist. A somewhat similar instance of indebtedness, in which the debt is repaid by additional insight, is seen by comparing a passage from Sir John Davis's *Orchestra*, or a poem on *Dancing*, with a stanza from *The Ancient Mariner*,—although there was much more of the true imaginative light in Sir John Davis than in Michael Drayton.

For lo, the sea that fleets about the land,
And like a girdle clips her solid waist,
Music and measure both doth understand ;
For his great crystal eye is always cast
Up to the moon, and on her fixed fast :
And as she danceth in her palid sphere
So danceth he about the centre here.

* Davis.

Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast ;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast—
If he may know which way to go ;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see ! how graciously
She looketh down on him.

Coleridge.

These extracts show how both Wordsworth and Coleridge assimilated past literary products, and how they glorified them by reproduction. There was very little, however, in the poetic imagery of previous centuries that Wordsworth reproduced. His imagination worked in a sphere of its own, free from the trammels of precedent; and he was more original than any other nineteenth century poet in his use of symbol and metaphor. The Poem to Joanna was probably composed on August 22, 1800, as the following occurs in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal under that date :—"William was composing all the morning . . . W. read us the poem of Joanna, beside the Rothay, by the roadside."—Ed.

THERE IS AN EMINENCE,—OF THESE OUR HILLS.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[It is not accurate that the Eminence here alluded to could be seen from our orchard-seat. It rises above the road by the side of Grasmere Lake towards Keswick, and its name is Stone-Arthur.]

~~THERE~~ is an Eminence,—of these our hills
The last that parleys with the setting sun ;

II.

L

We can behold it from our orchard-seat ;
 And, when at evening we pursue our walk
 Along the public way, this Peak,¹ so high
 Above us, and so distant in its height,
 Is visible ; and often seems to send
 Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
 The meteors make of it a favourite haunt ;
 The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
 In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
 As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth
 The loneliest place we have among the clouds.
 And She who dwells with me, whom I have loved
 With such communion that no place on earth
 Can ever be a solitude to me,
 Hath to this lonely Summit given my Name.²

Stone-Arthur is the name of the hill, on the east side of the Vale of Grasmere, opposite Helm Crag, and between Green Head Ghyll and Tongue Ghyll.—Ed.

A NARROW GIRDLE OF ROUGH STONES AND CRAGS.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[The character of the eastern shore of Grasmere Lake is quite changed since these verses were written, by the public road being carried along its side. The friends spoken of were Coleridge and my Sister, and the facts occurred strictly as recorded.]

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and crags,
 A rude and natural causeway, interposed
 Between the water and a winding slope
 Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern shore

¹ 1815.

. this cliff so high. 1800 and 1836.

² 1815.

Hath said this lonesome peak shall bear my name. 1800.

Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy : *
 And there myself and two belovèd Friends,
 One calm September morning, ere the mist
 Had altogether yielded to the sun,
 Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.
 ——Ill suits the road with one in haste ; but we
 Played with our time ; and, as we strolled along,
 It was our occupation to observe
 Such objects as the waves had tossed ashore—
 Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered bough,
 Each on the other heaped, along the line
 Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant mood,
 Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
 Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
 That skimmed the surface of the dead calm lake,
 Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand !
 And starting off again with freak as sudden ;¹
 In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,
 Making report of an invisible breeze
 That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
 Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.²
 ——And often, trifling with a privilege
 Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,
 And now the other, to point out, perchance
 To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too fair
 Either to be divided from the place

¹ 1815.

thistle's beard,
 Which, seeming lifeless half, and half impelled
 By some internal feeling, skimmed along
 Close to the surface of the lake that lay
 Asleep in a dead calm, ran closely on
 Along the dead calm lake, now here, now there. 1800.

² 1820.

Its very playmate, and its moving soul 1800.

* A new road has destroyed this retirement. (Footnote for next edition). C.

On which it grew, or to be left alone
 To its own beauty. Many such there are,
 Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall fern,¹
 So stately, of the queen Osmunda named;
 Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode
 On Grasmere's beech, than Naiad by the side
 Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
 Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.
 —So fared we that bright morning: from the fields,
 Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy mirth
 Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.
 Delighted much to listen to those sounds,²
 And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced³
 Along the indented shore; when suddenly,
 Through a thin veil of glittering haze was seen,⁴
 Before us, on a point of jutting land,
 The tall and upright figure of a Man
 Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,
 Angling beside the margin of the lake.⁵
 "Improvident and reckless," we exclaimed,
 "The Man must be, who thus can lose a day
 Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's hire
 Is ample, and some little might be stored

¹ 1802.

. . . chiefly that tall plant 1800.

² 1807.

Delighted much with listening to those sounds, C.

³ 1820.

Feeding unthinking fancies we advanced 1800.

⁴ 1827.

. . . we saw. 1800.

⁵ 1827.

That way we turned our steps; nor was it long,
 Ere making ready comments on the sight
 Which then we saw, with one and the same voice
 We all cried out, that he must be indeed
 "An idle man who thus could lose a day, 1800.
 An Idler, he who thus could lose a day. 1815,

Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time."
 Thus talking of that Peasant, we approached
 Close to the spot where with his rod and line
 He stood alone ; whereat he turned his head
 To greet us—and we saw a Man worn down
 By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken cheeks
 And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean
 That for my single self I looked at them,
 Forgetful of the body they sustained.—
 Too weak to labour in the harvest field,
 The Man was using his best skill to gain
 A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
 That knew not of his wants. I will not say
 What thoughts immediately were ours, nor how
 The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
 With all its lovely images, was changed
 To serious musing and to self-reproach.
 Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
 What need there is to be reserved in speech,
 And temper all our thoughts with charity.
 —Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,
 My Friend, Myself, and She who then received
 The same admonishment, have called the place
 By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
 As e'er by mariner was given to bay
 Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast ;
 And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the name it bears.

The text of this and the following poem reached its final state in the edition of 1827.

In Wordsworth's early days at Grasmere, a wild woodland path of quiet beauty led from Dove Cottage along the margin of the lake to the "Point" referred to in this poem, leaving the eastern shore truly "safe in its own privacy"—a "retired and difficult way"; the highway^{road} for carriages being at that time over White Moss Common. The late Dr Arnold, of Rugby and Foxhowe, used to name the

three roads from Rydal to Grasmere thus: the highest, "Old Corruption"; the intermediate, "Bit by bit Reform"; the lowest; and most level, "Radical Reform." Wordsworth was never quite reconciled to the radical reform effected on a road that used to be so delightfully wild and picturesque. The spot which the three friends rather infelicitously named "Point Rash-Judgment" is easily identified; although, as Wordsworth remarks, the character of the shore is changed by the public road being carried along its side. The friends were quite aware that the "memorial name" they gave it was "uncouth." In spite of its awkwardness, however, it will probably survive; if not for Browning's reason

The better the uncouth; *

Do roses stick like burrs? "

at least because of the incident which gave rise to the poem. The date of composition is fixed by Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, "10th Oct. 1800, Wm. sat up after me, writing 'Point Rash-Judgment.'"—ED.

TO M. H.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[To Mary Hutchinson, two years before our marriage. The pool alluded to is in Rydal Upper Park.]

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees:
 There was no road, nor any woodman's path;
 But a thick umbrage—checking the wild growth
 Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf¹
 Beneath the branches—of itself had made
 A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,
 And a small bed of water in the woods.
 All round this pool both flocks and herds might drink
 On its firm margin, even as from a well,
 Or some stone basin which the herdsman's hand
 Had shaped for their refreshment; nor did sun,
 Or wind from any quarter, ever come,
 But as a blessing to this calm recess,
 This glade of water and this one green field.

¹ 1827.

' The spot was made by Nature for herself ;
 ' The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
 ' Unknown to them ; but it is beautiful ;
 And if a man should plant his cottage near,
 Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,
 And blend its waters with his daily meal,
 He would so love it that in his death hour
 Its image would survive among his thoughts :
 And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still Nook,
 With all its beeches, we have named from You !

To find the pool referred to in the Fenwick note, I have carefully examined the course of Rydal beck, all the way up to the foot of the Fell. There is a pool beyond the enclosures of the Hall property, about five hundred feet above Rydal Mount, which partly corresponds to the description in the poem, but there is no wood around it now ; and the trees which skirt its margin are birch, ash, oak, and hazel, but there are no beeches. It is a short way below, some fine specimens of ice-worn rocks, which are to the right of the stream as you ascend it, and above these rocks is a well-marked moraine. It is a deep crystal pool, and has a "firm margin" of (artificially placed) stones. This may be the spot described in the poem ; or another, within the grounds of the Hall, may be the place referred to. It is a sequestered nook, beside the third waterfall as you ascend the beck—this third cascade being itself a treble fall. Seen two or three days after rain, when the stream is full enough to break over the whole face of the rock in showers of snowy brightness, yet low enough to shew the rock behind its transparent veil, it is specially beautiful. Trees change so much in eighty years that the absence of "beeches" now would not make this site impossible. In a MS. copy of the poem (of date Dec. 28, 1799), the last line of the poem is "with all its poplars, we have named from you." Of the circular pool beneath this fall it may be said, as Wordsworth describes it, that

. . . both flocks and herds might drink
 On its firm margin, even as from a well ;

and a "small slip of lawn" might easily have existed there in his time. We cannot, however, be confident as to the locality, and I add the opinion of several, whose judgment may be deferred to. Dr Cradock writes : "As to Mary Hutchinson's pool, I think that it was not on the beck anywhere, but some detached little pool, far up the hill, to the eastwards of the Hall, in 'the woods.' The description does not well suit any part of Rydal beck ; and no spot thereon could long 'remain unknown,' as the brook was until lately much haunted by anglers." [My difficulty as to a site "far up the hill" is, that it must

have been a pool of some size, if "both flocks and herds might drink" all round it; and there is no stream, scarce even a rill that joins Rydal beck on the right, all the way up from its junction with the Rothay.] The late Mr Hull of Rydal Cottage, wrote: "Although closely acquainted with every nook about Rydal Park, I have never been able to discover any spot corresponding to that described in Wordsworth's lines to M. H. It is possible, however, that the 'small bed of water' may have been a temporary rain pool, such as sometimes lodges in the hollows on the mountain-slope after heavy rain." Mr F. M. Jones, the agent of the Rydal property, writes: "I do not know of any pool of water in the Upper Rydal Park. There are some pools up the river, 'Mirror Pool' among them; but I hardly think there can ever have been 'beech-trees' growing near them." There are many difficulties, and the place may now be past identification. Possibly Wordsworth's wish may be fulfilled,—

The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
Unknown to them.

ED.

THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Suggested nearer to Grasmere, in the same mountain track as that referred to in the following note. The Eglantine remained many years afterwards, but is now gone.]

I.

"BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,"
Exclaimed an angry Voice,¹
"Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self
Between me and my choice!"
A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows
Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,²
That, all bespattered with his foam,
And dancing high and dancing low,
Was living, as a child might know,
In an unhappy home.

¹ 1336.

Exclaimed a thundering Voice,

1800.

² 1820.

A falling Water swoln with snows
Thus spake to a poor Briar-rose,

1800.

II.

“Dost thou presume my course to block?
Off, off! or, puny Thing!
I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock
To which thy fibres cling.”
The flood was tyrannous and strong;
The patient Briar suffered long,
Nor did he utter groan or sigh,
Hoping the danger would be past;
But, seeing no relief, at last,
He ventured to reply.

III.

“Ah!” said the Briar, “blame me not;
Why should we dwell in strife?
We who in this sequestered spot¹
Once lived a happy life!
You stirred me on my rocky bed—
What pleasure through my veins you spread
The summer long, from day to day,
My leaves you freshened and bedewed;
Nor was it common gratitude
That did your cares repay.

IV.

When spring came on with bud and bell,
Among these rocks did I
Before you hang my wreaths to tell
That gentle days were nigh!
And in the sultry summer hours,
I sheltered you with leaves and flowers;

¹ 1820.

We who in this, our natal spot

1800

And in my leaves—now shed and gone,
 The linnet lodged, and for us two
 Chanted his pretty songs, when you
 Had little voice or none.

V.

But now proud thoughts are in your breast—
 What grief is mine you see,
 Ah ! would you think, even yet how blest
 Together we might be !
 Though of both leaf and flower bereft,
 Some ornaments to me are left—
 Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,
 With which I, in my humble way,
 Would deck you many a winter day,¹
 A happy Eglantine !”

VI.

What more he said I cannot tell.
 The Torrent down the rocky dell
 Came thundering loud and fast ;²
 I listened, nor aught else could hear ;
 The Briar quaked—and much I fear
 Those accents were his last.

¹ 1836.

. many a winter's day, 1800.

1842.

The stream came thundering down the dell
 And galloped loud and fast ; 1800.The torrent thundered down the dell
 With unabating haste ; 1815.The torrent thundered down the dell
 With aggravated haste ; 1827.The stream came thundering down the dell
 With aggravated haste ; 1836.

The spot referred to in this poem can be identified with perfect accuracy. The Eglantine grew on the little brook that runs past two cottages (close to the path under Nab Scar), which have been built since the poet's time, and are marked Brockstone on the Ordnance map. "The plant itself of course has long disappeared : but in following up the rill through the copse, above the cottages, I found an unusually large Eglantine, growing by the side of the stream." (Dr Cradock, 1877.) It still grows luxuriantly there.

The following extract from Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal illustrates both this and the next Poem :—"Friday, 23d April 1802.—It being a beautiful morning, we set off at eleven o'clock, intending to stay out of doors all the morning. We went towards Rydal, under Nab Scar. The sun shone and we were lazy. Coleridge pitched upon several places to sit down upon ; but we could not be all of one mind respecting sun and shade, so we pushed on to the foot of the Scar. It was very grand when we looked up, very stony ; here and there a budding tree. William observed that the umbrella Yew-tree that breasts the wind had lost its character as a tree, and had become like solid wood. Coleridge and I pushed on before. We left William sitting on the stones, feasting with silence, and I sat down upon a rocky seat, a couch it might be, under the Bower of William's *Eglantine*, *Andrew's Broom*. He was below us, and we could see him. He came to us, and repeated his Poems, while we sat beside him. We lingered long, looking into the vales ; Ambleside Vale, with the copses, the village under the hill, and the green fields ; Rydale, with a lake all alive and glittering, yet but little stirred by breezes ; and our own dear Grasmere, making a little round lake of Nature's own, with never a house, never a green field, but the copses and the bare hills enclosing it, and the river flowing out of it. Above rose the Coniston Fells, in their own shape and colour, . . . the sky, and the clouds, and a few wild creatures. Coleridge went to search for something new. We saw him climbing up towards a rock. He called us, and we found him in a bower,—the sweetest that was ever seen. The rock on one side is very high, and all covered with ivy, which hung loosely about, and bore bunches of brown berries. On the other side, it was higher than my head. We looked down on the Ambleside vale, that seemed to wind away from us, the village lying under the hill. The fir tree island was reflected beautifully. . . . About this bower there is mountain-ash, common ash, yew tree, ivy, holly, hawthorn, roses, flowers, and a carpet of moss. Above at the top of the rock there is another spot. It is scarce a bower, little parlour, not enclosed by walls, but shaped out for a resting-place by the rocks, and the ground rising about it. It had a sweet moss carpet. We resolved to go and plant flowers, in both these places to-morrow."—ED.

THE OAK AND THE BROOM.

A PASTORAL.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Suggested upon the mountain pathway that leads from Upper Rydal to Grasmere. The ponderous block of stone, which is mentioned in the poem, remains, I believe, to this day, a good way up Nab-Scar. Broom grows under it, and in many places on the side of the precipice.]

I.

His simple truths did Andrew glean
Beside the babbling rills ;
A careful student he had been
Among the woods and hills.
One winter's night, when through the trees
The wind was roaring,¹ on his knees
His youngest born did Andrew hold :
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
Were seated round their blazing fire,
This Tale the Shepherd told.

II.

" I saw a crag, a lofty stone
As ever tempest beat !
Out of its head an Oak had grown,
A Broom out of its feet.
The time was March, a cheerful noon—
The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,
Breathed gently from the warm south-west ;
When, in a voice sedate with age,
This Oak, a giant and a sage,²
His neighbour thus addressed :—

¹ 1820.

The wind was thundering, . . . 1800.

² 1815.

. . . a giant and half-sage, 1800.

III.

' Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
 Along this mountain's edge,
 The Frost hath wrought both night and day,
 Wedge driving after wedge.
 Look up ! and think, above your head
 What trouble, surely, will be bred ;
 Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,
 The splinters took another road—
 I see them yonder—what a load
 For such a Thing as you !

IV.

You are preparing as before
 To deck your slender shape ;
 And yet, just three years back—no more—
 You had a strange escape :
 Down from yon cliff a fragment broke ;
 It thundered down with fire and smoke,
 And hitherward pursued its way ;¹
 This ponderous block was caught by me,
 And o'er your head, as you may see,
 'Tis hanging to this day !

V.

If breeze or bird to this rough steep
 Your kind's first seed did bear ;
 The breeze had better been asleep,

¹ 1820.

It came, you know, with fire and smoke,
 And hither did it bend its way.

1800

And hitherward it bent its way.

1805.

The bird caught in a snare :¹
 For you and your green twigs decoy
 The little witless shepherd-boy
 To come and slumber in your bower ;
 And trust me, on some sultry noon,
 Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon
 Will perish in one hour.

VI.

From me this friendly warning take '—
 The Broom began to doze,
 And thus, to keep herself awake,
 Did gently interpose :
 ' My thanks for your discourse are due ;
 That more than what you say is true,²
 I know, and I have known it long ;
 Frail is the bond by which we hold
 Our being, whether young or old,
 Wise, foolish, weak or strong.

VII.

Disasters, do the best we can,
 Will reach both great and small ;
 And he is oft the wisest man
 Who is not wise at all.
 For me, why should I wish to roam ?
 This spot is my paternal home,

¹ 1836.

The thing had better been asleep,
 Whatever thing it were,
 Or Breeze, or Bird, or fleece of Sheep,
 That first did plant you there.

1800.

Or Breeze, or Bird, or Dog, or Sheep,

1802.

² 1820.

* That it is true, and more than true.

1800.

It is my pleasant heritage ;
 My father many a happy year
 Spread here his careless blossoms, here
 Attained a good old age.

VIII.

Even such as his may be my lot.
 What cause have I to haunt
 My heart with terrors ? Am I not
 In truth a favoured plant !
 On me such bounty Summer pours,
 That I am covered o'er with flowers ;¹
 And, when the Frost is in the sky,
 My branches are so fresh and gay
 That you might look at me and say,
 This Plant can never die.

IX.

The butterfly, all green and gold,
 To me hath often flown,
 Here in my blossoms to behold
 Wings lovely as his own.
 When grass is chill with rain or dew,
 Beneath my shade, the mother-ewe
 Lies with her infant lamb ; I see
 The love they to each other make,
 And the sweet joy which they partake,
 It is a joy to me.'

X.

Her voice was blithe, her heart was light ;
 The Broom might have pursued

1815.

The Spring for me a garland weaves
 Of yellow flowers and verdant leaves.

1800.

Her speech, until the stars of night
 Their journey had renewed;
 But in the branches of the oak
 Two ravens now began to croak
 Their nuptial song, a gladsome air;
 And to her own green bower the breeze
 That instant brought two stripling bees
 To rest, or murmur there.

XI.

One night, my Children! from the north
 There came a furious blast;¹
 At break of day I ventured forth,
 And near the cliff I passed.
 The storm had fallen upon the Oak,
 And struck him with a mighty stroke,
 And whirled, and whirled him far away;
 And, in one hospitable cleft,
 The little careless Broom was left
 To live for many a day."

The spot is fixed within narrow limits by the Fenwick note. It is, beyond doubt, on the wooded part of Nab-Scar, through which the upper path from Grasmere to Rydal passes. There is one huge block of stone high above the path, which answers well to the description in the second stanza.—Ed.

HART-LEAP WELL.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

- [Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The first eight stanzas were composed extempore one winter evening in the cottage, when, after having tired myself with labouring at an awkward passage in "The Brothers," I started with a sudden impulse to this to get rid of the other, and finished it in a day or two. My sister and I had passed the

¹ 1815.

One night the wind came from the north
 And blew a furious blast.

place a few weeks before in our wild winter journey from Sockburn on the banks of the Tees to Grasmere. A peasant whom we met near the spot told us the story so far as concerned the name of the Well, and the Hart, and pointed out the Stones. Both the stones and the well are objects that may easily be missed. The tradition by this time may be extinct in the neighbourhood. The man who related it to us was very old.]

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second part of the following poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
 With the slow motion of a summer's cloud,
 And now, as he approached a vassal's door,¹
 "Bring forth another horse!" he cried aloud.

"Another horse!"—That shout the vassal heard
 And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey;
 Sir Walter mounted him: he was the third
 Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes;
 The horse and horseman are a happy pair;
 But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
 There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,
 That as they galloped made the echoes roar;
 But horse and man are vanished, one and all;
 Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
 Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain:
 Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,
 Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

¹ 1800.

He turned aside towards a vassal's door,
 And, "Bring another Horse," he cried aloud.

1800.

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on¹
 With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern ;
 But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by one,
 The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race ?
 The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?
 —This chase it looks not like an earthly chase ;²
 Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain-side ;
 I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
 Nor will I mention by what death he died ;
 But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn ;
 He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy :
 He neither cracked his whip,³ nor blew his horn,
 But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,
 Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat ;⁴
 Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned ;
 And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.⁵

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched :
 His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,
 And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched
 The waters of the spring were trembling still.

¹ 1827. . . . he chid, and cheered them on 1800.

² 1802. This race it looks not like an earthly race 1800.

³ 1820. . . . smacked his whip . . . 1800.

⁴ 1820. . . . this glorious feat 1800.

⁵ 1820. And foaming like a mountain cataract. 1800.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
 (Never had living man such joyful lot !)¹
 Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,
 And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.²

And climbing up the hill³—(it was at least
 Four roods⁴ of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found
 Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast⁵
 Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.⁶

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, “Till now
 Such sight was never seen by human eyes :⁷
 Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,
 Down to the very fountain where he lies.

I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
 And a small arbour, made for rural joy ;
 'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot,
 A place of love for damsels that are coy.

A cunning artist will I have to frame
 A basin for that fountain in the dell !
 And they who do make mention of the same,
 From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

- | | | |
|--------------------|--|-------|
| ¹ 1820. | Was never man in such a joyful case | 1800. |
| ² 1820. | that darling place. | 1800. |
| ³ 1802. | And turning up the hill, ... | 1800 |
| ⁴ 1845. | Nine roods | 1800. |
| ⁵ 1802. | Three several marks which with his hoofs the Beast | 1800. |
| ⁶ 1820. | the verdant ground. | 1800. |
| ⁷ 1836. | seen by living eyes | 1800. |

And, gallant Stag !¹ to make thy praises known,
 Another monument shall here be raised ;
 Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
 And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

And, in the summer-time when days are long,
 I will come hither with my Paramour ;
 And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
 We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

Till the foundations of the mountains fail
 My mansion with its arbour shall endure ;—
 The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
 And them who dwell among the woods of Ure !”

Then home he went, and left the Hart, stone-dead,
 With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.
 —Soon did the Knight perform what he had said ;
 And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.²

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had steered,
 A cup of stone received the living well ;
 Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,
 And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall
 With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,—
 Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,
 A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long
 Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour ;³

¹ 1827.

And gallant brute 1800.

² 1815.

The fame whereof through many a land did ring. 1800.

³ 1820.

. . . journeyed with his paramour. 1800.

And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—
But there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND.

THE moving accident is not my trade ;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :¹
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine :
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,
I saw three pillars standing in a line,—
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor head ;
Half wasted the square mound of tawny green ;
So that you just might say, as then I said,
“ Here in old time the hand of man hath been.”

I looked upon the hill ² both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And Nature here were willing to decay.

¹ 1802.

To curl the blood 1800.

² 1815.

. . . . upon the hills 1800.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow :—him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed :
“ A jolly place,” said he, “ in times of old !
But something ails it now : the spot is curst.

You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

The harbour does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream ;
But as to the great Lodge ! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood : but, for my part,
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

What thoughts must through the creature's brain
have past !

Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at this last—
O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell

What cause the Hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his death-bed near the well.

Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain ¹ in the summer-tide ;
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother's side.

In April here beneath the flowering thorn ²
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade ;³
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;
So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone."

" Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :
This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

The Being, that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

The pleasure-house is dust :—behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom ;
But Nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

1832.

Lulled by this fountain 1800.

1836.

. beneath the scented thorn. 1800.

1827.

But now here's neither grass 1800.

184 'TIS SAID, THAT SOME HAVE DIED FOR LOVE.

She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;
But at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals ;
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

This poem was suggested to Wordsworth, during the journey with his sister, from Sockburn in Yorkshire to Grasmere, in December 1799. I owe the following local note on *Hart Leap Well* to Mr John R. Tutin of Hull. "June 20, 1881, visited 'Hart Leap Well,' the subject of Wordsworth's poem. It is situate on the road side leading from Richmond to Askrigg, at a distance of not more than three and a-half miles from Richmond, and not five miles as stated in the prefatory note to the poem. The 'three aspens at three corners of a square' are things of the past ; also the 'three stone pillars standing in a line,' on the hill above. In a straight line with the spring of water, and where the pillars would have been, a wall has been built ; so that it is very probable the stone pillars were removed at the time of the building of this wall. The scenery around answers exactly to the description

"More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring time came not here,
And Nature here were willing to decay."

* * * * *

"Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade."

It is barren moor for miles around. The water still falls into the 'cup of stone,' which appeared to be of very long standing. Within ten yards of the well is a small tree, at the same side of the road as the well, on the right hand coming from Richmond."—ED.

'TIS SAID, THAT SOME HAVE DIED FOR LOVE.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

'Tis said that some have died for love :
And here and there a church-yard grave is found .
In the cold north's unhallowed ground,

Because the wretched man himself had slain,
His love was such a grievous pain.
And there is one whom I have five years known :
He dwells alone
Upon Helvellyn's side :
He loved—the pretty Barbara died ;
And thus he makes his moan :
Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid
When thus his moan he made :

“ Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind that oak !
Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,
That in some other way yon smoke
May mount into the sky !
The clouds pass on ; they from the heavens depart :
I look—the sky is empty space ;
I know not what I trace ;
But when I cease to look, my hand is on my heart.

O ! what a weight is in these shades ! Ye leaves.
That murmur once so dear, when will it cease ¹ ?
Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,
It robs my heart of peace.²
Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and loud and free,
Into yon row of willows flit,
Upon that alder sit ;
Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

¹ 1836.

When will that dying murmur be suppressed. 1800.

² 1836.

• my heart of peace bereaves,
It robs my heart of rest. 1800.

Roll back, sweet Rill ! back to thy mountain-bounds,
 And there for ever be thy waters chained !
 For thou dost haunt the air with sounds
 That cannot be sustained ;
 If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough
 Headlong yon waterfall must come,
 Oh let it then be dumb !
 Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which thou art now.

Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny showers,
 Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,¹
 Thou one fair shrub, oh ! shed thy flowers,
 And stir not in the gale.
 For thus to see thee nodding in the air,
 To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,
 Thus rise, and thus descend,—
 Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can bear.”

The Man who makes this feverish complaint
 Is one of giant stature, who could dance
 Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.
 Ah gentle Love ! if ever thought was thine
 To store up kindred hours for me, thy face
 Turn from me, gentle Love ! nor let me walk
 Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor know ²
 Such happiness as I have known to-day.

¹ 1836.

Thou Eglantine whose arch so proudly towers
 (Even like a rainbow spanning half the vale) 1800.

² 1836.

. or know 1800.

If the second, third, fourth, and fifth stanzas of this Poem had been published without the first and the last, it would have been deemed an

exquisite fragment by those who object to the explanatory preamble, and to the moralising sequel. The intermediate stanzas suggest Burns'

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair !
How can ye chant ye little birds,
An' I sae weary, fu' o' care !

—a mood of mind which Wordsworth appreciated as fully as the opposite or complementary feeling, which finds expression in the "Ode on Immortality."

No more shall grief of mine the Season wrong.

The allusion in the last stanza of this Poem is to his Sister Dorothy.—
ED.

THE CHILDLESS FATHER.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. When I was a child at Cocker-mouth, no funeral took place without a basin filled with sprigs of boxwood being placed upon a table covered with a white cloth in front of the house. The huntings on foot, in which the old man is supposed to join as here described, were of common, almost habitual, occurrence in our vales when I was a boy, and the people took much delight in them. They are now less frequent.]

"UP, Timothy, up with your staff and away !
Not a soul in the village this morning will stay ;
The hare has just started from Hamilton's grounds,
And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds."

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and green,¹
On the slopes of the pastures all colours were seen ;
With their comely blue aprons, and caps white as snow,
The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

¹ 1802.

. . . both grey, red, and green

1800.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six months before,
 Filled the funeral basin* at Timothy's door;¹
 A coffin through Timothy's threshold had past;
 One Child did it bear, and that Child was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the fray,
 The horse and the horn, and the hark! hark away!
 Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut
 With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said:
 "The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead."
 But of this in my ears not a word did he speak;
 And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.

SONG FOR THE WANDERING JEW.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains
 Roar down many a craggy steep,
 Yet they find among the mountains
 Resting-places calm and deep.

¹ 1843.

The basin of boxwood, just six months before,
 Had stood on the table at Timothy's door 1800.

The basin had offered, just six months before,
 Fresh sprigs of green boxwood at Timothy's door; 1820.

Fresh sprigs of green boxwood, just six months before,
 Filled the funeral basin at Timothy's door; 1832.

* In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of box-wood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this box-wood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased. 1800.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,
Ere the storm its fury stills,
Helmet-like themselves will fasten
On the heads of towering hills.

What, if through the frozen centre
Of the Alps the Chamois bound,
Yet he has a home to enter
In some nook of chosen ground :

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean
Yield him no domestic cave,
Slumbers without sense of motion,
Couched upon the rocking wave.

If on windy days the Raven
Gambol like a dancing skiff,
Not the less she loves her haven
In the bosom of the cliff.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,
Vagrant over desert sands,
Brooding on her eggs reposes
When chill night that care demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,
Never nearer to the goal ;
Night and day, I feel the trouble
Of the Wanderer in my soul.

RURAL ARCHITECTURE.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. These structures, as every one knows, are common amongst our hills, being built by shepherds, as conspicuous marks, and occasionally by boys in sport.]

THERE's George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and Reginald Shore,
Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the highest not more
Than the height of a counsellor's bag ;
To the top of GREAT HOW * did it please them to climb :
And there they built up, without mortar or lime,
A Man on the peak of the crag.

They built him of stones gathered up as they lay :
They built him and christened him all in one day,
An urchin both vigorous and hale ;
And so without scruple they called him Ralph Jones.
Now Ralph is renowned for the length of his bones ;
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,
And, in anger or merriment, out of the north,
Coming on with a terrible pother,
From the peak of the crag blew the giant away.
And what did these school-boys ?—The very next day
They went and they built up another.

—Some little I've seen of blind boisterous works
By Christian disturbers more savage than Turks,¹

¹ 1820.

In Paris and London, 'mong Christians and Turks, 1800.

* Great How is a single and conspicuous hill, which rises towards the foot of Thirlmere, on the western side of the beautiful dale of Legberthwaite, along the high road between Keswick and Ambleside. 1800.

Spirits busy to do and undo :
 At remembrance whereof my blood sometimes will flag ;
 Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top of the crag ;
 And I'll build up a giant with you.

The editions 1836, 1842, and 1845, and the Fenwick note, assign this poem to the year 1801. It must, however, have been composed during the previous year, because it was published in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1800. The last stanza was omitted in edd. 1805 and 1815. The locality referred to, which is also associated with *The Waggoner*, is very easily identified.—ED.

ELLEN IRWIN :

OR, THE BRAES OF KIRTLE.*

Comp. 1800. ——— Pub. 1800.

[It may be worth while to observe that as there are Scotch Poems on this subject, in simple ballad strain, I thought it would be both presumptuous and superfluous to attempt treating it in the same way ; and, accordingly, I chose a construction of stanza quite new in our language ; in fact, the same as that of Bürger's *Leonora*, except that the first and third lines do not, in my stanzas, rhyme. At the outset I threw out a classical image to prepare the reader for the style in which I meant to treat the story, and so to preclude all comparison.]

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate
 Upon the braes of Kirtle,
 Was lovely as a Grecian maid
 Adorned with wreaths of myrtle ;
 Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,
 And there did they beguile the day
 With love and gentle speeches,
 Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires
 The Bruce had been selected ;
 And Gordon, fairest of them all,
 By Ellen was rejected.

* The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the events here related took place. 1800.

Sad tidings to that noble Youth !
For it may be proclaimed with truth,
If Bruce hath loved sincerely,
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,
His shattered hopes and crosses,
To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,
Reclined on flowers and mosses ?
Alas that ever he was born !
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,
Sees them and their caressing ;
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts
That through his brain are travelling,
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce
He launched a deadly javelin !
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,
And, starting up to meet the same,
Did with her body cover
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,
Thus, from the heart of her True-love,
The mortal spear repelling.
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain
And fought with rage incessant
Against the Moorish crescent.

But many days and many months,
And many years ensuing,
This wretched Knight did vainly seek
The death that he was wooing.

So, coming his last help to crave,
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave
His body he extended,
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard
The tale I have been telling,
May in Kirkconnel churchyard view
The grave of lovely Ellen :
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid ;
And, for the stone upon his head,
May no rude hand deface it,
And its forlorn *Hic jacet*.

No Scottish ballad is superior to *Helen of Kirkconnell* in pathos. It is based on a traditionary tale—the date of the event being lost—but the locality, in the parish of Kirkpatrick-Fleming in Dumfriesshire, is known ; and there the graves of “Burd Helen” and her lover are still pointed out. The following is Sir Walter Scott's account of the story :—

“A lady of the name of Helen Irving, or Bell (for this is disputed by the two clans), daughter of the laird of Kirkconnell in Dumfriesshire, and celebrated for her beauty, was beloved by two gentlemen in the neighbourhood. The name of the favoured suitor was Adam Fleming of Kirkpatrick : that of the other has escaped tradition, although it has been alleged he was a Bell of Blackel-house. The addresses of the latter were, however, favoured by the friends of the lady, and the lovers were therefore obliged to meet in secret, and by night, in the Churchyard of Kirkconnell, a romantic spot, surrounded by the river Kirtle. During one of their private interviews, the jealous and despised lover suddenly appeared on the opposite bank of the stream, and levelled his carbine at the breast of his rival. Helen threw herself before her lover, received in her bosom the bullet, and died in his arms. A desperate and mortal combat ensued between Fleming and the murderer, in which the latter was cut to pieces.” See *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. ii. p. 317.

This is the original ballad—

I wish I were where Helen lies !
Night and day on me she cries ;
• O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirkconnell lee !

Cursed be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succour me !

Oh think ye na my heart was sair,
When my love dropt down and spake nae mair !
There did she swoon wi' meikle care,
On fair Kirkconnell lee.

As I went down the water side, *
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirkconnell lee—

I lighted down, my sword did draw,
I hacked him in pieces sma',
I hacked him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

Oh, Helen fair, beyond compare !
I'll weave a garland of thy hair
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I dee !

Oh that I were where Helen lies !
Day and night on me she cries ;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste, and come to me !"

O Helen fair ! O Helen chaste !
Were I with thee I would be blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest,
On fair Kirkconnell lee.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding sheet drawn o'er my e'en,
And I in Helen's arms lying
On fair Kirkconnell lee.

I wish I were where Helen lies !
Night and day on me she cries,
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me !

ANDREW JONES.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

I HATE that Andrew Jones ; he'll breed
His children up to waste and pillage.
I wish the press-gang or the drum
With its tantara sound would come,¹
And sweep him from the village !

I said not this, because he loves
Through the long day to swear and tippie ;
But for the poor dear sake of one
To whom a foul deed he had done,
A friendless man, a travelling cripple !

For this poor crawling helpless wretch
Some horseman who was passing by,
A penny on the ground had thrown ;
But the poor cripple was alone
And could not stoop—no help was nigh.

Inch-thick the dust lay on the ground
For it had long been drougty weather ;
So with his staff the cripple wrought
Among the dust till he had brought
The half-pennies together.

It chanced that Andrew passed that way
Just at the time ; and there he found
The cripple in the mid-day heat
Standing alone, and at his feet
He saw the penny on the ground.

He stopped and took the penny up ;
 And when the cripple nearer drew,
 Quoth Andrew, " Under half-a-crown,
 What a man finds is all his own,
 And so, my Friend, good-day to you."

And *hence* I said, that Andrew's boys
 Will all be trained to waste and pillage ;
 And wished the press-gang, or the drum
 With its tantara sound, would come²
 And sweep him from the village !

Andrew Jones was included in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800, 1802, and 1805 and in the *Poems* of 1815. It was never republished after 1815.—ED.

THE TWO THIEVES ;

OR, THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[This is described from the life, as I was in the habit of observing when a boy at Hawkshead School. Daniel was more than eighty years older than myself when he was daily, thus occupied, under my notice. No books have so early taught me to think of the changes to which human life is subject, and while looking at him I could not but say to myself—we may, one of us, I or the happiest of my playmates, live to become still more the object of pity than this old man, this half-doating pilferer.]

O NOW that the genius of Bewick* were mine,
 And the skill which he learned on the banks of the Tyne,
 Then the Muses might deal with me just as they chose,
 For I'd take my last leave both of verse and of prose.

¹ 2 1800.

Would with its rattling music come. . . . 1815.

* Thomas Bewick, the wood engraver, born at Cherryburn, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, in 1753, died 1828. He revived the art of wood engraving in England ; his illustrations, drawn for the *General History of British Quadrupeds* (1790), and for his own *History of British Birds* (1797 and 1804), being unrivalled in their way.—ED.

What feats would I work with my magical hand !
 Book-learning and books should be banished the land :
 And, for hunger and thirst and such troublesome calls,
 Every ale-house should then have a feast on its walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes on a chair ;
 Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw would he care !
 For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and his sheaves,
 O, what would they be to my tale of Two Thieves ?

The One, yet unbreeched, is not three birthdays old,¹
 His Grandsire that age more than thirty times told ;
 There are ninety² good seasons of fair and foul weather
 Between them, and both go a-pilfering together.³

With chips is the carpenter strewing his floor ?
 Is a cart-load of turf⁴ at an old woman's door ?
 Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will slide !
 And his Grandson's as busy at work by his side.

Old Daniel begins ; he stops short—and his eye,
 Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning and sly :
 'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own,
 But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.

¹ 1820.

Little Dan is unbreeched, he is three birthdays old, 1800.

² 1802.

There's ninety 1800.

³ 1833.

. go a-stealing together 1800.

⁴ 1827.

Is a cart-load of peats 1800.

He once¹ had a heart which was moved by the wires
 Of manifold pleasures and many desires :
 And what if he cherished his purse ? 'Twas no more
 Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands ; but Daniel is one
 Who went something farther than others have gone,
 And now with old Daniel you see how it fares ;
 You see to what end he has brought his grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand ; ere the sun
 Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is begun :
 And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,
 This child but half knows it, and that, not at all.

They hunt through the streets² with deliberate tread,
 And each, in his turn, becomes leader or led ;³
 And, wherever they carry their plots and their wiles,
 Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy they roam ;
 For the grey-headed Sire⁴ has a daughter at home,
 Who will gladly repair all the damage that's done ;
 And three, were it asked, would be rendered for one.

¹ 1820.

Dan once 1800.

² 1802.

. . . through the street 1800.

³ 1836.

. . . is both leader and led. 1800.

⁴ 1820.

For the grey-headed Dan 1800.

Old Man ! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,
 I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy side :
 Long yet may'st thou live ! for a teacher we see
 That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

A CHARACTER.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

[The principal features are taken from my friend Robert Jones.]

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find space
 For so many strange contrasts in one human face :¹
 There's thought and no thought, and there's paleness and
 bloom,
 And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.

There's weakness, and strength both redundant and vain ;
 Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain
 Could pierce through a temper that's soft to disease
 Would be rational peace—a philosopher's ease.

There's indifference, alike when he fails or succeeds,
 And attention full ten times as much as there needs ;
 Pride where there's no envy, there's so much of joy ;
 And mildness, and spirit both forward and coy.

There's freedom, and sometimes a diffident stare
 Of shame scarcely seeming to know that she's there,
 There's virtue, the title it surely may claim,
 Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy the name.

¹ 1836.

For the weight and the levity seen in that face : 1800.

This picture from nature may seem to depart,¹
 Yet the Man would at once run away with your heart ;
 And I for five centuries right gladly would be
 Such an odd, such a kind happy creature as he.

The full title of this poem, in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800, is "A Character, in the antithetical manner." It was omitted from all subsequent editions till 1836. It was with this friend, Robert Jones—a fellow collegian at St John's College, Cambridge—that Wordsworth visited the Continent (France and Switzerland), during the long vacation in 1790 ; and to him he dedicated the first edition of *Descriptive Sketches*, in 1793. With him he also made a pedestrian tour in Wales in 1791. Jones afterwards became the incumbent of Soulderne, near Deddington, in Oxfordshire ; and Wordsworth described his parsonage there in the sonnet, beginning "Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends."—Ed.

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE STOOD ON ST HERBERT'S ISLAND, DERWENT-WATER.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

If thou in the dear love of some one Friend
 Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
 Will sometimes in the happiness of love
 Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
 This quiet spot ; and, Stranger ! not unmoved
 Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
 The desolate ruins of St Herbert's Cell.
 Here stood his threshold ; here was spread the roof
 That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,
 After long exercise in social cares
 And offices humane, intent to adore
 The Deity, with undistracted mind,
 And meditate on everlasting things,

¹ 1836.

What a picture ! 'tis drawn without nature or art ; 1800.

In utter solitude. But he had left
 A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man loved
 As his own soul. And, when with eye upraised
 To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,
 While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
 Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
 Along the beach of this small isle and thought
 Of his Companion, he would pray that both
 (Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
 Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
 So prayed he :—as our chronicles report,
 Though here the Hermit numbered his last day
 Far from St Cuthbert his beloved Friend,
 Those holy Men both died in the same hour.¹

¹ 1832.

The text of this poem underwent so many changes, which are not easily shown by the plan adopted throughout this edition—portions of the earliest version of 1800 being abandoned and again adopted, and the whole arrangement of the passages being altered—that it seems desirable to append the entire text of 1800, and extensive parts of that of subsequent years. The final text of 1832 is printed above.

If thou in the dear love of some one friend
 Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
 Will, sometimes, in the happiness of love
 Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
 This quiet spot.—St Herbert hither came,
 And here, for many seasons, from the world
 Removed, and the affections of the world,
 He dwelt in solitude. He living here
 This island's sole inhabitant ! had left
 A fellow-labourer, whom the good man loved
 As his own soul ; and when within his cave
 Alone he knelt before the crucifix
 While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
 Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
 Along the beach of this small isle, and thought
 Of his Companion, he had prayed that both
 Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
 So prayed he ;—as our chronicles report,
 Though here the Hermit numbered his last days

Far from St Cuthbert his beloved friend,
 Those holy Men both died in the same hour. 1800.

The versions of 1802 and 1807, which are identical, omit one line of the text of 1800, as under—

He dwelt in solitude. But he had left
 A Fellow-labourer, &c. 1802, 1807.

The text of 1815, which is continued in 1820, begins thus—

This island, guarded from profane approach
 By mountains high and waters widely spread,
 Is that recess to which St Herbert came
 In life's decline ; a self-secluded man,
 After long exercise in social cares
 And offices humane, intent to adore
 The Deity, with undistracted mind,
 And meditate on everlasting things.
 Stranger ! this shapeless heap of stones and earth
 (Long be its mossy covering undisturbed)
 Is revered as a vestige of the abode
 In which, through many seasons, from the world
 Removed, and the affections of the world,
 He dwelt in solitude. But he had left
 A Fellow-labourer, &c. 1815 and 1820.

In 1827 the poem began thus—

Stranger ! this shapeless heap of stones and earth
 Is the last relic of St Herbert's Cell.
 Here stood his threshold ; here was spread the roof
 That sheltered him, a self-secluded man,
 After long exercise, &c. 1827.

"The shapeless heap of stones" in St Herbert's Island, which were "desolate ruins" in 1800, are even more "shapeless" and "desolate" now, but they can easily be identified. The island is near the centre of the lake, and is in area about four acres. The legend of St Herbert dates from the middle of the seventh century. The rector of Clifton, Westmoreland, Dr Robinson, writing in 1819, says :—"The remains of his hermitage are still visible, being built of stone and mortar, and formed into two apartments, one of which, about twenty feet long and sixteen feet wide, seems to have been his chapel ; the other, of less dimensions, his cell. Near these ruins the late Sir Wilfred Lawson (to whose representative the island at present belongs) erected some years ago a small octagonal cottage, which, being built of unhewn stone, and artificially mossed over, has a venerable appearance." (See *Guide to the Lakes*, by John Robinson, D.D., 1819). This cottage has now disappeared.—ED.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE IN THE WALL
OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT
GRASMERE.

RUDE is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen
Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained
Proportions more harmonious, and approached
To closer fellowship with ideal grace.¹
But take it in good part:—alas! the poor²
Vitruvius of our village had no help
From the great City; never, upon leaves³
Of red Morocco folio, saw displayed,
In long succession, pre-existing ghosts⁴
Of Beauties yet unborn—the rustic Lodge
Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,
Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,
Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined hermitage.⁵
Thou see'st a homely Pile,⁶ yet to these walls
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here

¹ 1836.

To somewhat of a closer fellowship
With the ideal grace. Yet as it is
Do take it in good part 1800.

² 1815.

. ; for he, the poor
Vitruvius 1800.

³ 1836.

. never on the leaves. 1800.

⁴ 1836.

The skeletons, and pre-existing ghosts 1800.

⁵

. the rustic Box,
Snug Cot, with Coach-house, Shed, and Hermitage. 1800.

⁶ 1815.

It is a homely pile. 1800.

The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind.
 And hither does one Poet sometimes row
 His pinnance, a small vagrant barge, up-piled
 With plenteous store of heath and withered fern,
 (A lading which he with his sickle cuts, *
 Among the mountains) and beneath this roof
 He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
 Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn, the Sheep,
 Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
 Lie round him, even as if they were a part
 Of his own Household ; nor, while from his bed
 He looks, through the open door-place, toward the lake ¹
 And to the stirring breezes, does he want
 Creations lovely as the work of sleep—
 Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy !

This “homely pile” on the island of Grasmere—very homely—still remains.—ED.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A STONE, THE
 LARGEST OF A HEAP LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY,
 UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL.

Comp. 1800. — Pub. 1800.

STRANGER ! this hillock of mis-shapen stones
 Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,²
 Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the Cairn
 Of some old British Chief : 'tis nothing more
 Than the rude embryo of a little Dome

¹ 1836.

He through that door-place looks toward the lake. 1800.

² 1836.

Is not a ruin of the ancient time.

1800.

Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be built ¹
 Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle
 But, as it chanced, Sir William having learned
 That from the shore a full-grown man might wade
 And make himself a freeman of this spot
 At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight ²
 Desisted, and the quarry and the mound
 Are monuments of his unfinished task.
 The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
 Was once selected as the corner-stone
 Of that intended Pile, which would have been
 Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate skill,
 So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
 And other little builders who dwell here,
 Had wondered at the work. But blame him not
 For old Sir William was a gentle Knight,
 Bred in this vale, to which he appertained
 With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,
 And for the outrage which he had devised
 Entire forgiveness!—But if thou art one
 On fire with thy impatience to become
 An inmate of these mountains,—if, disturbed
 By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn
 Out of the quiet rock the elements
 Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to blaze
 In snow-white splendour,—think again; and, taught
 By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
 Thy fragments to the bramble and the rose;
 There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,
 And let the redbreast hop from stone to stone.

¹ 1802.

Or pleasure-house, which was to have been built. 1800.

² 1836.

. . . . the Knight forthwith. 1800.

1801.

The chronological table in the first volume of this edition was printed before I discovered, from the perusal of Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, that it was during the year 1801 that her brother wrote his versions of Chaucer. They were not published till the years 1820, and 1842 ; and, in the absence of other evidence, they were assigned by me to these years respectively. But there is no doubt that they were written in December 1801. Only two other poems belong to 1801, viz.:—*The Sparrow's Nest*, and the Sonnet on Skiddaw. During this year, however, *The Excursion* was in progress. In its earlier stages, and before the plan of *The Recluse* was matured, the introductory part was known in the Wordsworth household by the name of *The Pedlar* ; and the following extracts from the Journal of 1801 will show the progress that was being made with it :—"Dec. 21.—Wm. sate beside me, and wrote the Pedlar. 22d.—W. composed a few lines of the Pedlar. 23d.—William worked at the Ruined Cottage (which was the name of the first part of the Excursion), and made himself very ill," &c.—ED.

THE SPARROW'S NEST.

Comp. 1801. — Pub. 1807.

[Written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere. At the end of the garden of my father's house at Cockermouth was a high terrace that commanded a fine view of the river Derwent and Cockermouth Castle. This was our favourite play-ground. The terrace wall, a low one, was covered with closely-clipt privet and roses, which gave an almost impervious shelter to birds who built their nests there. The latter of these stanzas alludes to one of those nests.]

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade
Those bright blue eggs together laid !
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight.¹
I started—seeming to espy
The home and sheltered bed,

¹ 1815.

Look, five blue eggs are gleaming there !
Few visions have I seen more fair,
Nor many prospects of delight
More pleasing than that simple sight !

The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
 My Father's house, in wet or dry
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it ;
 Dreading, tho' wishing to be near it :¹
 Such heart was in her, being then
 A little Prattler among men.
 The Blessing of my later years
 Was with me when a boy :
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears ;
 And humble cares, and delicate fears ;
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears ;
 And love, and thought, and joy.

This Poem, first published in the series entitled "Moods of my own Mind," in 1807, was, in the edition of 1815, placed amongst the "Poems founded on the Affections." There it remained, in the six collective editions that followed, till, in 1845, it was transferred to the "Poems referring to the period of childhood." Wordsworth's "sister Emmeline" was his only sister, Dorothy.—ED.

PELION AND OSSA FLOURISH SIDE BY SIDE.

Comp. 1801. — Pub. 1815.

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,
 Together in immortal books enrolled :
 His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold ;
 And that inspiring Hill, which 'did divide,
 Into two ample horns his forehead wide,
 Shines with poetic radiance as of old ;
 While not an English Mountain we behold
 By the celestial Muses glorified.

¹ 1845.

• She looked at it as if she feared it ;
 Still wishing, dreading to be near it :

Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in crowds :
 What was the great Parnassus' self to Thee,
 Mount Skiddaw ? In his natural sovereignty
 Our British Hill is nobler far ; he shrouds
 His double front among Atlantic clouds,¹
 And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.

SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER

MODERNISED.

Wordsworth's modernisations of Chaucer were all written in 1801. Two of them were from the *Canterbury Tales*, but his version of one of these—*The Manciple's Tale*—has never been printed. Of the three poems which were published, the first—*The Prioress' Tale*—was included in the edition of 1820. The *Troilus and Cressida* and *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* appeared in the "Poems of Early and Late Years," 1842. But they had also been published the year before in a small volume entitled "The Poems of Geoffrey Chaucer Modernised" (London, 1841), a volume to which Elizabeth Barrett, Leigh Hunt, R. H. Horne, Thomas Powell, and others contributed. Wordsworth wrote thus of the project to Mr Powell :—"I am glad that you enter so warmly into the Chaucerian project, and that Mr L. Hunt is disposed to give his valuable aid to it. For myself, I cannot do more than I offered, to place at your disposal *The Prioress' Tale* already published, *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, *The Manciple's Tale*, and I rather think (but I cannot just now find it) a small portion of the *Troilus and Cressida*. You ask my opinion about that poem. Speaking from a recollection only, of many years past, I should say it would be found too long and probably tedious. The *Knight's Tale* is also very long ; but, though Dryden has executed it in his own way observe, with great spirit and harmony, he has suffered too much of the simplicity, and with that of the beauty and occasional pathos of the original to escape, that I should be pleased to hear that a new version should be attempted upon my principle by some competent person. It would delight me to read every part of Chaucer over again—for I reverence and admire him above measure—with a view to your work ; but my eyes will not permit me to do so. Who will undertake the Prologue to the *C. Tales* ?

¹ 1827.

His double-fronted head in higher clouds.

1815.

For your publication that is indispensable, and I fear it will prove very difficult. It is written, as you know, in the couplet measure ; and therefore I have nothing to say upon its metre, but in respect to the poems in stanza, neither in *The Prioress' Tale* nor in *The Cuckoo and Nightingale* have I kept to the rule of the original as to the form, and number, and position of the *rhymes* ; thinking it enough if I kept the same number of lines in each stanza ; and this is, I think, all that is necessary, and all that can be done without sacrificing the substance of sense too often to the mere form of sound." (From an unpublished and undated letter, written probably in 1840.) In a letter to Professor Henry Reed, dated "Rydal Mount, January 13th, 1841," Wordsworth said, "So great is my admiration of Chaucer's genius, and so profound my reverence for him as an instrument in the hands of Providence, for spreading the light of literature through his native land, that notwithstanding the defects and faults in this publication" (referring, I presume, to the volume, "*The Poems of Geoffrey Chaucer Modernised*"), I am glad of it, as a means of making many acquainted with the original, who would otherwise be ignorant of everything about him but his name."—ED.

THE PRIORESS' TALE.

Comp. 1801. — Pub. 1820.

"Call up him who left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold."

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been made than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author : so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as *also* and *alway*, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The fierce bigotry of the Prioress forms a fine back-ground for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child ; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

"O LORD, our Lord ! how wondrously," (quoth she)
"Thy name in this large world is spread abroad !
For not alone by men of dignity

Thy worship is performed and precious laud ;
But by the mouths of children, gracious God !
Thy goodness is set forth ; they when they lie
Upon the breast thy name do glorify.

II.

Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I may,
Jesu ! of thee, and the white Lily-flower
Which did thee bear, and is a Maid for aye,
To tell a story I will use my power ;
Not that I may increase her honour's dower,
For she herself is honour, and the root
Of goodness, next her Son, our soul's best boot.

III.

O Mother Maid ! O Maid and Mother free !
O bush unburnt ! burning in Moses' sight !
That down didst ravish from the Deity,
Through humbleness, the spirit that did alight
Upon thy heart, whence, through that glory's might,
Conceived was the Father's sapience,
Help me to tell it in thy reverence !

IV.

Lady ! thy goodness, thy magnificence,
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,
Surpass all science and all utterance ;
For sometimes, Lady ! ere men pray to thee
Thou goest before in thy benignity,
The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

V.

My knowledge is so weak, O blissful Queen !
To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,
That I the weight of it may not sustain ;
But as a child of twelve months old or less,
That laboureth his language to express,
Even so fare I ; and therefore, I thee pray,
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall say.

VI.

There was in Asia, in a mighty town,
'Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews might be,
Assigned to them and given them for their own
By a great Lord, for gain and usury,
Hateful to Christ and to his company ;
And through this street who list might ride and wend ;
Free was it, and unbarred at either end.

VII.

A little school of Christian people stood
Down at the farther end, in which there were
A nest of children come of Christian blood,
That learned in that school from year to year
Such sort of doctrine as men used there,
That is to say, to sing and read also,
As little children in their childhood do.

VIII.

Among these children was a Widow's son,
A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,*
Who day by day unto this school hath gone,

* Chaucer's phrase is "a litel clergeon," Wordsworth's, "a little scholar ;" but "clergeon" is a chorister, not a scholar.—Ed.

And eke, when he the image did behold
 Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,
 This Child was wont to kneel adown and say
Ave Maria, as he goeth by the way.

IX.

This Widow thus her little Son hath taught
 Our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,
 To worship aye, and he forgat it not;
 For simple infant hath a ready ear.
 Sweet is the holiness of youth: and hence,
 Calling to mind this matter when I may,
 Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth aye,
 For he so young to Christ did reverence.*

X.

This little child, while in the school he sate
 His Primer conning with an earnest cheer,†
 The whilst the rest their anthem-book repeat

* Chaucer's text is—

Thus hath this widow her litel child i-taught
 Our blissful lady, Criste's moder deere,
 To worschip ay, and he forgat it nought;
 For sely child wil alway soone leere.

"For sely child wil alway soone leere," i.e., for a happy child will
 always learn soon. Wordsworth renders—

For simple infant hath a ready ear,

and adds—

Sweet is the holiness of youth,
 extending the stanza to receive this addition from seven to eight
 lines, with an altered rhyme-system.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

† Chaucer's text is—

This litel child his litel book lernynge
 As he sat in the schole in his primere.—ED.

The *Alma Redemptoris* did he hear ;
And as he durst he drew him near and near,
And hearkened to the words and to the note,
Till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

XI.

This Latin knew he nothing what it said,
For he too tender was of age to know ;
But to his comrade he repaired, and prayed
That he the meaning of this song would show,
And unto him declare why men sing so ;
This oftentimes, that he might be at ease,
This child did him beseech on his bare knees.

XII.

His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,
Answered him thus :—‘ This song, I have heard say,
Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free ;
Her to salute, and also her to pray
To be our help upon our dying day :
If there is more in this, I know it not :
Song do I learn,—small grammar I have got.’

XIII.

‘ And is this song fashioned in reverence
Of Jesu’s Mother ?’ said this Innocent ;
‘ Now, certès, I will use my diligence
To con it all ere Christmas-tide be spent ;
Although I for my Primer shall be shent,
And shall be beaten three times in an hour,
Our Lady I will praise with all my power.’

XIV.

His Schoolfellow, whom he had so besought,
 As they went homeward taught him privily
 And then he sang it well and fearlessly,
 From word to word according to the note :
 Twice in a day it passèd through his throat ;
 Homeward and schoolward whensoever he went,
 On Jesu's mother fixed was his intent.

XV.

Through all the Jewry (this before said I)
 This little Child, as he came to and fro,
 Full merrily then would he sing and cry,
O Alma Redemptoris ! high and low :
 The sweetness of Christ's Mother piercèd so
 His heart, that her to praise, to her to pray,
 He cannot stop his singing by the way.

XVI.

The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that hath
 His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, upswelled—' O woe,
 O Hebrew people !' said he in his wrath,
 'Is it an honest thing ? Shall this be so ?
 That such a Boy where'er he lists¹ shall go
 In your despite, and sing his hymns and saws,
 Which is against the reverence of our laws !'

XVII.

From that day forward have the Jews conspired
 Out of the world this Innocent to chase ;
 And to this end a Homicide they hired,

¹ 1827.

That in an alley had a privy place,
And, as the Child, 'gan to the school to pace,
This cruel Jew him seized, and held him fast
And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast.

XVIII.

I say that him into a pit they threw,
A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents exhale ;
O cursèd folk ! away, ye Herods new !
What may your ill intentions you avail ?
Murder will out ; certès it will not fail ;
Know, that the honour of high God may spread,
The blood cries out on your accursèd deed.

XIX.

O Martyr 'stablished in virginity !
Now may'st thou sing for aye before the throne,
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she,
" Of which, the great Evangelist, Saint John,
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that go
Before the Lamb singing continually,
That never fleshly woman they did know.

XX.

Now this poor widow waiteth all that night
After her little Child, and he came not ;
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning light,
With face all pale with dread and busy thought,
She at the School and elsewhere him hath sought,
Until thus far she learned, that he had been
In the Jews' street, and there he last was seen.

XXI.

With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed
She goeth, as she were half out of her mind,

To every place wherein she hath supposed
By likelihood her little Son to find ;
And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind
She cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,
And him among the accursed Jews she sought

XXII.

She asketh, and she piteously doth pray
To every Jew that dwelleth in that place
To tell her if her child had passed that way ;
They all said—Nay ; but Jesu of his grace
Gave to her thought, that in a little space
She for her Son in that same spot did cry
Where he was cast into a pit hard by.

XXIII.

O thou great God that dost perform thy laud
By mouths of Innocents, lo ! here thy might ;
This gem of chastity, this emerald,
And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,
There, where with mangled throat he lay upright,
The *Alma Redemptoris* 'gan to sing
So loud that with his voice the place did ring.

XXIV.

The Christian folk that through the Jewry went
Come to the spot in wonder at the thing ;
And hastily they for the Provost sent ;
Immediately he came, not tarrying,
And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly King,
And eke his Mother, honour of Mankind :
Which done, he bade that they the Jews should bind.

XXV.

This Child with piteous lamentation then
 Was taken up, singing his song alway ;
 And with procession great and pomp of men
 To the next Abbey him they bare away ;
 His Mother swooning by the body lay :¹
 And scarcely could the people that were near
 Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

XXVI.

Torment and shameful death to every one
 This Provost doth for those bad Jews prepare
 That of this murder wist, and that anon :
 Such wickedness his judgments cannot spare ;
 Who will do evil, evil shall he bear ;
 Them therefore with wild horses did he draw,
 And after that he hung them by the law.

XXVII.

Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie
 Before the altar while the Mass doth last :
 The Abbot with his convent's company
 Then sped themselves to bury him full fast ;
 And, when they holy water on him cast,
 Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was the water,
 And sang, *O Alma Redemptoris Mater !*

XXVIII.

This Abbot, for he was a holy man,
 As all Monks are, or surely ought to be,
 In supplication to the Child began

¹ 1845.

. . . swooning by the bier lay.

1820.

Thus saying, ' O dear Child ! I summon the
 In virtue of the holy Trinity
 Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this hymn,
 Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth seem.

XXIX.

' My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,'
 Said this young Child, ' and by the law of kind
 I should have died, yea many hours ago ;
 But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye find,
 Will that his glory last, and be in mind ;
 And, for the worship of his Mother dear,
 Yet may I sing, *O Alma !* loud and clear.

XXX.

' This well of mercy, Jesu's Mother sweet,
 After my knowledge I have loved alway ;
 And in the hour when I my death did meet
 To me she came, and thus to me did say,
 " Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay,"
 As ye have heard ; and soon as I had sung
 Methought she laid a grain upon my tongue.

XXXI.

' Wherefore I sing, nor can from song refrain,
 In honour of that blissful Maiden free,
 Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain :
 And after that thus said she unto me ;
 " My little Child, then will I come for thee
 Soon as the grain from off thy tongue they take :
 Be not dismayed, I will not thee forsake !" '

XXXII.

This holy Monk, this Abbot—him mean I,
 Touched then his tongue, and took away the grain;
 And he gave up the ghost full peacefully;
 And, when the Abbot had this wonder seen,
 His salt tears trickled down like showers of rain;
 And on his face he dropped upon the ground,
 And still he lay as if he had been bound.

XXXIII.

Eke the whole Convent on the pavement lay,
 Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother dear;
 And after that they rose, and took their way,
 And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,
 And in a tomb of precious marble clear
 Enclosed his uncorrupted body sweet.—*
 Where'er he be, God grant us him to meet!

XXXIV.

Young Hew of Lincoln! in like sort laid low
 By cursèd Jews—thing well and widely known,
 For it was done a little while ago—¹
 Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry
 Weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying eye,
 In mercy would his mercy multiply
 On us, for reverence of his Mother Mary!"

"Friday, 4th December 1801. . . . William translating The Prioress Tale." "Saturday, 5th. William finished The Prioress' Tale, and after tea, Mary and he wrote it out" (Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal).—ED.

¹ 1836.

For not long since was dealt the cruel blow.

1820.

*Chaucer's text is—

• And in a tombe of marble stoones clere
 Enclosed they this litel body swete.

THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE

Comp. 1801. — Pub. 1841.

THE God of Love—*ah, benedicite !*
 How mighty and how great a Lord is he !
 For he of low hearts can make high, of high
 He can make low, and unto death bring nigh ;
 And hard hearts he can make them kind and free.¹

II.

Within a little time, as hath been found,
 He can make sick folk whole and fresh and sound :
 Them who are whole in body and in mind,
 He can make sick,—bind can he and unbind
 All that he will have bound, or have unbound.

III.

To tell his might my wit may not suffice ;
 Foolish men he can make them out of wise ;—
 For he may do all that he will devise ;
 Loose livers he can make abate their vice,
 And proud hearts can make tremble in a trice.

¹ In 1819 Wordsworth wrote the opening stanza of his version of *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, in the Album of Mrs Calvert at Keswick, thus :—

The God of Love—ah, benedicite !
 How mighty and how great a Lord is He !
 High can he make the heart that's low and poor,
 And high hearts low—through pains that they endure,
 And hard hearts, He can make them kind and free.

W. W., Nov. 27, 1819.

IV.

In brief, the whole of what he will, he may ;
Against him dare not any wight say nay ;
To humble or afflict whome'er he will,
To gladden or to grieve, he hath like skill ;
But most his might he sheds on the eve of May.

V.

For every true heart, gentle heart and free,
That with him is, or thinketh so to be,
Now against May shall have some stirring—whether
To joy, or be it to some mourning ; never
At other time, methinks, in like degree..

VI.

For now when they may hear the small birds' song,
And see the budding leaves the branches throng,
This unto their remembrance doth bring
All kinds of pleasure mix'd with sorrowing ;
And longing of sweet thoughts that ever long.

VII.

And of that longing heaviness doth come,
Whence oft great sickness grows of heart and home ;
Sick are they all for lack of their desire ;
And thus in May their hearts are set on fire,
So that they burn forth in great martyrdom.

VIII.

In sooth, I speak from feeling, what though now
Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow ;
Yet have I felt of sickness through the May,
Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every day —
How hard, alas ! to bear, I only know.

IX.

Such shaking doth the fever in me keep
Through all this May that I have little sleep ;
And also 'tis not likely unto me,
That any living heart should sleepy be
In which Love's dart its fiery point doth steep.

X.

But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,
I of a token thought which lovers heed ;
How among them it was a common tale
That it was good to hear the Nightingale,
Ere the vile Cuckoo's note be utterèd.

XI.

And then I thought anon as it was day,
I would go somewhere to essay
If I perchance a Nightingale might hear,
For yet had I heard none of all that year,
And it was then the third night of the May.

XII.

And soon^{*} as I a glimpse of day espied,
 No longer would I in my bed abide,
 But straightway to a wood that was hard by
 Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,
 And held the pathway down by a brook-side;

XIII.

Till to a lawn I came all white and green,
 I in so fair a one had never been.
 The ground was green, with daisy powdered over;
 Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty cover,
 All green and white; and nothing else was seen.*

* In *The Cuckoo and Nightingale*, a poem of the third of May—a date corresponding to the mid-May, the very heart of May according to our modern reckoning—the poet (Chaucer) after a wakeful night rises, and goes forth at dawn, and comes to a “laund” or plain “of white and green.”

So feire oon had I nevere in bene,
 The grounde was grene, y poudred with daysé,
 The flowres and the gras ilike al hie,
 Al grene and white, was nothing elles sene.

Nothing seen but the short green grass and the ~~white daisies, — grass~~ and daisies being of equal height. Unfortunately in Tyrwhitt's ~~and~~ the description is nonsensical,

The flowres and the greves like hie.

The daisy flowers are as high as the *groves*! Wordsworth retained the groves, but refused to make daisies of equal height with them.

Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty cover,
 All green and white; and nothing else was seen.

(Edward Dowden, in a paper on “Wordsworth's Modernisations of Chaucer,” read to the Wordsworth Society, May 3d, 1882.)

XIV.

There sate I down among the fair fresh flowers,
And saw the birds come tripping from their bowers,
Where they had rested them all night ; and they,
Who were so joyful at the light of day,
Began to honour May with all their powers.

XV.

Well did they know that service all by rote,
And there was many and many a lovely note,
Some, singing loud, as if they had complained ;
Some with their notes another manner feigned ;
And some did sing all out with the full throat.

XVI.

They pruned themselves, and made themselves right gay,
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray ;
And ever two and two together were,
The same as they had chosen for the year,
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day.

XVII.

Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sate upon,
Was making such a noise as it ran on
Accordant to the sweet Birds' harmony ;
Methought that it was the best melody
Which ever to man's ear a passage won.

XVIII.

And for delight, but how I never wot,
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught,
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly ;
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy,
Broke silence, or I heard him in my thought.

XIX.

And that was right upon a tree fast by,
 And who was then ill satisfied but I?
 Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the rood,
 From thee and thy base throat, keep all that's good,
 Full little joy have I now of thy cry.

XX.

And, as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan chide,
 In the next bush that was me fast beside,
 I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,
 That her clear voice made a loud rioting,
 Echoing through all the green wood wide.*

XXI.

Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my heart's cheer,
 Hence hast thou stay'd a little while too long;
 For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,
 And she hath been before thee with her song;
 Evil light on her! she hath done me wrong.

*In Chaucer's poem, after "the cuckoo, bird unholy," has said his evil say, the Nightingale breaks forth "so lustily,"

That with her clere voys she made rynge
 Thro out alle the grene wode wide,

Wordsworth has taken a poet's licence with these lines:

I heard the lusty nightingale so sing,
 That her clear voice made a *loud rioting*,
 Echoing through all the green wood wide.

This "loud rioting" is Wordsworth's, not Chaucer's; and it belongs, as it were, to that other passage of his—

O Nightingale, thou surely art
 A creature of a fiery heart,
 These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce;
 Tumultuous harmony and fierce!
 Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
 Had helped thee to a Valentine.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

XXII.

But hear you now a wondrous thing, I pray ;
As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,
Methought I wist right well what these birds meant,
And had good knowing both of their intent,
And of their speech, and all that they would say.

XXIII.

The Nightingale thus in my hearing spake :—
Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or brake,
And, prithee, let us that can sing dwell here ;
For every wight eschews thy song to hear,
Such uncouth singing verily dost thou make.

XXIV.

What ! quoth she then, what is't that ails thee now ?
It seems to me I sing as well as thou ;
For mine's a song that is both true and plain,—
Although I cannot quaver so in vain
As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not how.

XXV.

All men may understanding have of me,
But, Nightingale, so may they not of thee ;
For thou hast many a foolish and quaint cry :—
Thou say'st OSEE, OSEE : then how may I
Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this may be ?

XXVI.

Ah, fool ! quoth she, wist thou not what it is ?
Oft as I say OSEE, OSEE, I wis,
Then mean I, that I should be wondrous fain
That shamefully they one and all were slain,
Whoever against Love mean aught amiss.

XXVII.

And also would I that they all were dead,
Who do not think in love their life to lead ;
For who is loth the God of Love to obey,
Is only fit to die, I dare well say,
And for that cause OSEE I cry ; take heed !

XXVIII.

Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint law,
That all must love or die ; but I withdraw,
And take my leave of all such company,
For mine intent it neither is to die,
Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw.

XXIX.

For lovers, of all folk that be alive,
The most disquiet have and least do thrive ;
Most feeling have of sorrow woe and care,
And the least welfare cometh to their share ;
What need is there against the truth to strive ?

XXX.

What ! quoth she, thou art all out of thy mind,
That in thy churlishness a cause canst find
To speak of Love's true Servants in this mood ;
For in this world no service is so good
To every wight that gentle is of kind.

XXXI.

For thereof comes all goodness and all worth ;
All gentleness and honour thence come forth :
Thence worship comes, content and true heart's pleasure,
And full-assured trust, joy without measure,
And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and mirth ;

XXXII.

And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy,
And seemliness, and faithful company,
And dread of shame that will not do amiss ;
For he that faithfully Love's servant is,
Rather than be disgraced, would chuse to die.

XXXIII.

And that the very truth it is which I
Now say—in such belief I'll live and die ;
And Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice.
Then, quoth she, let me never hope for bliss,
If with that counsel I do e'er comply.

XXXIV.

Good Nightingale ! thou speakest wondrous fair,
Yet for all that, the truth is found elsewhere ;
For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis :
And Love in old folk a great dotage is ;
Who most it useth, him 'twill most impair.

XXXV.

For thereof come all contraries to gladness ;
Thence sickness comes, and overwhelming sadness,
Mistrust and jealousy, despite, debate,
Dishonour, shame, envy importunate,
Pride, anger, mischief, poverty, and madness.

XXXVI.

Loving is aye an office of despair,
And one thing is therein which is not fair ;
For whoso gets of love a little bliss,
Unless it alway stay with him, I wis
He may full soon go with an old man's hair.

XXXVII.

And, therefore, Nightingale ! do thou keep nigh,
For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint cry,
If long time from thy mate thou be, or far,
Thou'lt be as others that forsaken are ;
Then shalt thou raise a clamour as do I.

XXXVIII.

Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill beseen !
The God of Love afflict thee with all teen,
For thou art worse than mad a thousand fold ;
For many a one hath virtues manifold,
Who had been nought, if Love had never been.

XXXIX.

For evermore his servants Love amendeth,
And he from every blemish them defendeth ;
And maketh them to burn, as in a fire,
In loyalty, and worshipful desire;
And, when it likes him, joy enough them sendeth.

XL.

Thou Nightingale ! the Cuckoo said, be still
For Love no reason hath but his own will ;—
For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and joy ;
True lovers doth so bitterly annoy,
He lets them perish through that grievous ill.

XLI.

With such a master would I never be ; *
For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not see,

* From a manuscript in the Bodleian, as are also stanzas 44 and 45, which are necessary to complete the sense. 1841.

And knows not when he hurts and when he heals ;
Within this court full seldom Truth avails,
So diverse in his wilfulness is he.

XLII.

Then of the Nightingale did I take note,
How from her inmost heart a sigh she brought,
And said, Alas ! that ever I was born,
Not one word have I now, I am so forlorn,—
And with that word, she into tears burst out.

XLIII.

Alas, alas ! my very heart will break,
Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus speak
Of Love, and of his holy services ;
Now, God of Love ! thou help me in some wise,
That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may wreak.

XLIV.

And so methought I started up anon,
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,
Which at the Cuckoo hardily I cast,
And he for dread did fly away full fast ;
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was gone.

XLV.

And as he flew, the Cuckoo, ever and aye,
Kept crying, " Farewell !—farewell, Popinjay !"
As if in scornful mockery of me ;
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,
Till he was far, all out of sight, away.

XLVI.

Then straightway came the Nightingale to me,
And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I thank thee,
That thou wert near to rescue me ; and now
Unto the God of Love I make a vow,
That all this May I will thy songstress be.

XLVII.

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she said,
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou heard'st me ;
Yet if I live it shall amended be,
When next May comes, if I am not afraid.

XLVIII.

And one thing will I counsel thee also,
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love's saw ;
All that she said is an outrageous lie.
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereto, quoth I,
For Love, and it hath done me mighty woe.

XLIX. .

Yea, hath it ? use, quoth she, this medicine ;
This May-time, every day before thou dine,
Go look on the fresh daisy ; then say I,
Although for pain thou may'st be like to die,
Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop and pine.

And mind always that thou be good and true,
And I will sing one song, of many new,

For love of thee, as loud as I may cry,
And then did she begin this song full high,
“ Beshrew all them that are in love untrue.”

LI.

And soon as she had sung it to the end,
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence must wend ;
And, God of Love, that can right well and may,
Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,
As ever he to Lover yet did send.

LII.

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of me ;
I pray to God with her always to be,
And joy of love to send her evermore ;
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her lore,
For there is not so false a bird as she.

LIII.

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightingale,
To all the Birds that lodged within that dale,
And gathered each and all into one place ;
And them besought to hear her doleful case,
And thus it was that she began her tale.

LIV.

The Cuckoo—’tis not well that I should hide
How she and I did each the other chide,
And without ceasing, since it was daylight ;
And now I pray you all to do me right
Of that false Bird whom Love can not abide.

LV.

Then spake one Bird, and full assent all gave :
 This matter asketh counsel good as grave,
 For birds we are—all here together brought ;
 And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is not ;
 And therefore we a Parliament will have.

LVI.

And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,
 And other Peers whose names are on record ;
 A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,
 And judgment there be given, or that intent
 Failing, we finally shall make accord.

LVII.

And all this shall be done, without a nay,
 The morrow after Saint Valentine's day,
 Under a maple that is well beseen,
 Before the chamber-window of the Queen,
 At Woodstock, on the meadow green and gay.

LVIII.

She thanked them ; and then her leave she took,
 And flew into a hawthorn by that brook ;
 And there she sate and sung—upon that tree—
 “For term of life Love shall have hold of me”—
 So loudly, that I with that song awoke.

Unlearned Book and rude, as well I know,
 For beauty thou hast none, nor eloquence,
 Who did on thee the hardiness bestow
 To appear before my Lady ? but a sense
 Thou surely hast of her benevolence,
 Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth give
 For of all ~~good~~ she is the best alive.

Alas, poor Book ! for thy unworthiness,
 To show to her some pleasant meanings writ
 In winning words, since through her gentleness,
 Thee she accepts as for her service fit !
 Oh ! it repents me I have neither wit
 Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give ;
 For of all good she is the best alive.

Beseech her meekly with all lowliness,
 Though I be far from her I reverence,
 To think upon my truth and steadfastness,
 And to abridge my sorrow's violence,
 Caused by the wish, as knows your sapience,
 She of her liking proof to me would give ;
 For of all good she is the best alive.

L'ENVOY.

Pleasure's Aurora, Day of gladsomeness !
 Luna by night, with heavenly influence
 Illumined ! root of beauty and goodnesse,
 Write, and allay, by your beneficence,
 My sighs breathed forth in silence,—comfort give !
 Since of all good, you are the best alive.

EXPLICIT.

The following extracts from Miss Wordsworth's Journal show the date of the composition of this poem. "Sunday, 6th December 1801. A very fine beautiful sun-shiny morning. William worked a while at Chaucer ; then he set forward to walk into Easdale. . . . In the afternoon I read Chaucer aloud." "Monday, 7th. . . William at work with Chaucer, 'The God of Love.' . . ." "8th November . . . Wm. worked at The 'Cuckoo and the Nightingale' till he was tired." "Wed., Dec. 9. I read 'Palemon and Arcite,' William writing out his alterations of Chaucer's 'Cuckoo and Nightingale.'" The question as to whether *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* was written by Chaucer or not, may be solved either way without affecting its literary value.—ED.

TROILUS AND CRESIDA.

Comp. 1801. — Pub. 1841.

NEXT morning Troilus began to clear
 His eyes from sleep, at the first break of day,
 And unto Pandarus, his own Brother dear,
 For love of God, full piteously did say,
 We must the Palace see of Cresida ;
 For since we yet may have no other feast,
 Let us behold her Palace at the least !

And therewithal to cover his intent
 A cause he found into the Town to go,*
 And they right forth to Cresid's Palace went
 But, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,
 Him thought his sorrowful heart would break in two ;
 For when he saw her doors fast bolted all,
 Well nigh for sorrow down he 'gan to fall.

Therewith when this true Lover 'gan behold
 How shut was every window of the place,
 Like frost he thought his heart was icy cold ;

* Chaucer's text is—

And therewithalle his meynye for to blende
 A cause he fonde in toune for to go.

“His meynye for to blende,” *i.e.*, to keep his household or his domestics in the dark. But Wordsworth writes—

And therewithal to cover his *intent*,
 possibly mistaking *meynye* for *meaning*.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

For which, with changèd, pale, and deadly face,
 Without word uttered, forth he gan to pace ;
 And on his purpose bent so fast to ride
 That no wight his continuance espied.*

Then said he thus,—O Palace desolate !
 O house of houses, once so richly dight !
 O Palace empty and disconsolate !
 Thou lamp of which extinguished is the light ;
 O Palace whilom day that now art night,
 Thou ought'st to fall and I to die ; since she
 Is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O, of all houses once the crownèd boast !
 Palace illumined with the sun of bliss ;
 O ring of which the ruby now is lost,
 O cause of woe, that cause has been of bliss :
 Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss
 Thy cold doors ; but I dare not for this rout ;
 Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint is out !

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,
 With changèd face, and piteous to behold ;
 And when he might his time aright espy,
 Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told
 Both his new sorrow and his joys of old,
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue,
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

* When Troilus sees the shut windows and desolate aspect of his lady's house, his face grows blanched, and he rides past in haste, so fast says Wordsworth,

That no wight his continuance espied.

But in Chaucer he rides fast that his white face may not be noticed—

And as God wolde he gan so faste ride
 That no wight of his countenance espied.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

Forth from the spot he rideth up and down,
And everything to his remembrance
Came as he rode by places of the town
Where he had felt such perfect pleasure once,
Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,
And in that Temple she with her bright eyes,
My Lady dear, first bound me captive-wise.

And yonder with joy-smitten heart have I
Heard my own Cresid's laugh : and once at play
I yonder saw her eke full blissfully :
And yonder once she unto me 'gan say—
Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I pray !
And there so graciously did me behold,
That hers unto the death my heart I hold.

And at the corner of that self-same house
Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,
So womanly, with voice melodious
Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear,
That in my soul methinks I yet do hear
The blissful sound ; and in that very place
My Lady first me took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love ! then thus he cried,
When I the process have in memory
How thou hast wearied me on every side,
Men thence a book might make, a history ;
What need to seek a conquest over me,
Since I am wholly at thy will ? what joy
Hast thou thy own liege subjects to destroy ?

Dread Lord ! so fearful when provoked, thine ire
Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain and grief :

Now mercy, Lord ! thou know'st well I desire
Thy grace above all pleasures first and chief ;
And live and die I will in thy belief :
For which I ask for guerdon but one boon,
That Cressida again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return
As thou dost mine with longing her to see,
Then know I well that she would not sojourn.
Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be
Unto the blood of Troy, I pray of thee,
As Juno was unto the Theban blood,
From whence to Thebes came griefs in multitude.

And after this he to the gate did go
Whence Cressid rode, as if in haste she was ;
And up and down there went, and to and fro,
And to himself full oft he said, alas !
From hence my hope and solace forth did pass.
O would the blissful God now for his joy,
I might her see again coming to Troy !

And up to yonder hill was I her guide ;
Alas, and there I took of her my leave ;
Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,
For very grief of which my heart shall cleave ;—
And hither home I came when it was eve ;
And here I dwell an outcast from all joy,
And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft
That he was blighted, pale, and waxen less
Than he was wont : and that in whispers soft
Men said, what may it be, can no one guess

Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?
 All which he of himself conceited wholly
 Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head
 That every wight, who in the way passed by,
 Had of him ruth, and fancied that they said,
 I am right sorry Troilus will die:
 And thus a day or two drove wearily;
 As ye have heard; such life 'gan he to lead
 As one that standeth betwixt hope and dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to show
 The occasion of his woe, as best he might;
 And made a fitting song, of words but few,
 Somewhat his woeful heart to make more light;
 And when he was removed from all men's sight,
 With a soft voice, he of his Lady dear,
 That absent was, 'gan sing as ye may hear.

O star, of which I lost have all the light,
 With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,
 That ever dark in torment, night by night,
 Toward my death with wind I steer and sail;*
 For which upon the tenth night if thou fail
 With thy bright beams to guide me but one hour,
 My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

* Toward my death with wind I steer and sail,
 This is Tyrwhitt's version, but Chaucer's text is,

Toward my death, with wind *in stern* I sail,
 Troilus' bark careering towards death, with all sails set, before a fierce
 stern wind.—EDWARD DOWDEN.

As soon as he this song had thus sung through,
He fell again into his sorrows old ;
And every night, as was his wont to do,
Troilus stood the bright moon to behold ;
And all his trouble to the moon he told,
And said ; I wis, when thou art horn'd anew,
I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that morrow,
When hence did journey my bright Lady dear,
That cause is of my torment and my sorrow ;
For which, oh, gentle Luna, bright and clear,
For love of God, run fast above thy sphere ;
For when thy horns begin once more to spring,
Then shall she come that with her bliss may bring.

The day is more, and longer every night
Than they were wont to be—for he thought so ;
And that the sun did take his course not right,
By longer way than he was wont to go ;
And said, I am in constant dread I trow,
That Phæton his son is yet alive,
His too fond father's car amiss to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,
To the end that he the Grecian host might see ;
And ever thus he to himself would talk :—
Lo ! yonder is my own bright Lady free ;
Or yonder is it that the tents must be ;
And thence does come this air which is so sweet
That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

✱

And certainly this wind, that more and more
By moments thus increaseth in my face,

Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore ;
 I prove it thus ; for in no other space
 Of all this town, save only in this place,
 Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like pain ;
 It saith, Alas, why severed are we twain ?

A weary while in pain he tosseth thus,
 Till fully past and gone was the ninth night ;
 And ever at his side stood Pandarus,
 Who busily made use of all his might
 To comfort him, and make his heart more light
 Giving him always hope, that she the morrow
 Of the tenth day will come, and end his sorrow.

1802.

The Lyrical Ballads and Sonnets which follow were written in 1802 ; but during that year Wordsworth continued to work at *The Excursion*, as the following extracts from his sister's Journal indicate :—" Feb. 1, 1802. — William worked hard at the Pedlar, and tired himself. 2d Feb. — Wm. worked at the Pedlar. I read aloud the 11th book of Paradise Lost. Thursday, 4th. — William thought a little about the Pedlar. 5th. — Wm. sate up late at the Pedlar. 7th. — W. was working at his poem. Wm. read the Pedlar, thinking it was done. But lo ! . . . it was uninteresting, and must be altered." Similar records occur each day in the Journal from the 10th to the 14th Feb. 1802. — Ed.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

Comp. March 11th and 12th, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

ONE morning (raw it was and wet—
 A foggy day in winter time)
 A Woman on the road I met,
 Not old, though something past her prime :
 Majestic in her person, tall and straight ;
 And like a Roman matron's was her mien and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead ;
 Old times, thought I, are breathing there ;
 Proud was I that my country bred
 Such strength, a dignity so fair :
 She begged an alms, like one in poor estate ;
 I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,
 "What is it," said I, "that you bear,
 Beneath the covert of your Cloak,
 Protected from this cold damp air ?"¹
 She answered, soon as she the question heard,
 "A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,
 "I had a Son, who many a day
 Sailed on the Seas, but he is dead ;
 In Denmark he was cast away :
 And I have travelled weary miles to see
 If aught which he had owned might still remain for me."²

¹ 1836.

With the first word I had to spare,
 I said to her, "Beneath your cloak
 What's that which on your arm you bear ?" 1807.

"What treasure," said I, "do you bear,
 Beneath the covert of your cloak,
 Protected from the cold damp air. 1820.

² 1827.

And I have been as far as Hull, to see
 What clothes he might have left, or other property. 1807.

And I have travelled far as Hull, to see
 1815.

And I have travelled many miles to see,
 If aught which he had owned might still remain
 for me. 1820.

The bird and cage they both were his :
 'Twas my Son's bird ; and neat and trim
 He kept it : many voyages
 The singing-bird had ² gone with him ;
 When last he sailed, he left the bird behind,
 From bodings, as might be, that hung upon his mind.³

He to a fellow-lodger's care
 Had left it, to be watched and fed,
 And pipe its song in safety ;—there⁴
 I found it when my Son was dead ;
 And now, God help me for my little wit !
 I bear it with me, Sir ;—he took so much delight in it."

² 1820.

hath gone with him.

1807.

³ 1827.

As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind. 1807.

⁴ 1827.

Till he came back again ; and there

1807.

In the Wordsworth household this poem went by the name of *The Singing Bird* as well as *The Sailor's Mother*. "Thursday (March 11th).—A fine morning. William worked at the poem of the Singing Bird. . . ." "Friday (March 12th).—William finished his poem of the Singing Bird." (Dorothy Wordsworth's Grasmere Journal.)

ALICE FELL;

OR, POVERTY.

Comp. March 12th and 13th, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Written to gratify Mr Graham of Glasgow, brother of the author of "The Sabbath." He was a zealous coadjutor of Mr Clarkson, and a man of ardent humanity. The incident had happened to himself, and he urged me to put it into verse, for humanity's sake. The humbleness, meanness if you like, of the subject, together with the homely mode of treating it, brought upon me a world of ridicule by the small critics, so that in policy I excluded it from many editions of my poems, till it was restored at the request of some of my friends, in particular my son-in-law, Edward Quillinan.]

It was only excluded from the editions 1820 and 1832.—Ed.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
 For threatening clouds the moon had drowned;
 When, as we hurried on, my ear
 Was smitten with a startling sound.¹

As if the wind blew many ways,
 I heard the sound,—and more and more;
 It seemed to follow with the chaise,
 And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out;
 He stopped his horses at the word,
 But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,
 Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast
 The horses scampered through the rain;
 But, hearing soon upon the blast
 The cry, I bade him halt again.²

Forthwith alighting on the ground,
 "Whence comes," said I, "this piteous moan?"³
 And there a little Girl I found,
 * Sitting behind the chaise, alone.

¹ 1846.

When suddenly I seemed to hear
 A moan, a lamentable sound.

1807.

² 1846.

And soon I heard upon the blast
 The voice, and bade him halt again.

1807.

³ 1846.

Said I, alighting on the ground,
 "What can it be, this piteous moan?"

1
 1807.

"My cloak!" no other word she spake,¹
 But loud and bitterly she wept,²
 As if her innocent heart would break;³
 And down from off her seat she leapt.⁴

"What ails you, child?"—she sobbed "Look here!"
 I saw it in the wheel entangled,
 A weather-beaten rag as e'er
 From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,
 It hung, nor could at once be freed;
 But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,⁵
 A miserable rag indeed!⁶

"And whither are you going, child,
 To-night along these lonesome ways?"
 "To Durham," answered she, half wild—
 "Then come with me into the chaise."

- | | | |
|--------------------|--|-------|
| ¹ 1843. | "My cloak," the word was last and first, | 1807. |
| | "My cloak," no other word she spoke, | 1836. |
| ² 1836. | And loud | 1807. |
| ³ 1842. | As if her very heart would burst ; | 1807. |
| | As if her innocent heart would burst ; | 1836. |
| ⁴ 1818. | And down from off the chaise she leapt. | 1807. |
| ⁵ 1845. | "Twas twisted betwixt nave and spoke ; | |
| | Her help she lent, and with good heed | |
| | Together we released the cloak ; | 1307. |
| | between | 1827 |
| ⁶ 1836. | A wretched, wretched rag indeed ! | 1807 |

Insensible to all relief
 Sat the poor girl, and forth did send
 Sob after sob,¹ as if her grief
 Could never, never have an end.

"My child, in Durham do you dwell?"
 She checked herself in her distress,
 And said, "My name is Alice Fell;
 I'm fatherless and motherless.

And I to Durham, Sir, belong."
 Again,² as if the thought would choke
 Her very heart, her grief grew strong;
 And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end
 Was nigh; and, sitting by my side,
 As if she had lost her only friend
 She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post;
 Of Alice and her grief I told;
 And I gave money to the host,
 To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,
 As warm a cloak as man can sell!"
 Proud creature was she the next day,
 The little orphan, Alice Fell!

¹ 1846.

She sat like one past all relief;
 Sob after sob she forth did send
 In wretchedness,

1807.

² 1836.

And then

1807.

In Dorothy Wordsworth's journal, the following reference to this poem occurs :—"Feb. 16, 1802.—Mr Graham said he wished William had been with him the other day. He was riding in a post-chaise, and he heard a strange cry that he could not understand. The sound continued, and he called to the chaise-driver to stop. It was a little girl that was crying as if her heart would burst. She had got up behind the chaise, and her cloak had been caught by the wheel, and was jammed in, and it hung there. She was crying after it, poor thing. Mr Graham took her into the chaise, and her cloak was released from the wheel, but the child's misery did not cease, for her cloak was torn to rags. It had been a miserable cloak before ; but she had no other, and it was the greatest sorrow that could befall her. Her name was Alice Fell. She had no parents, and belonged to the next town. At the next town Mr G. left money to buy her a new cloak." "Friday (March 12).—In the evening after tea William wrote Alice Fell." "Saturday Morning (13th March).—William finished Alice Fell, and then wrote the Poem of the Beggar Woman. . . ."—Ed.

B E G G A R S.

Comp. March 13th and 14th, 1802. ——— Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Me, and described to me by my sister, near the quarry at the head of Rydal Lake, a place still a chosen resort of vagrants travelling with their families.]

SHE had a tall man's height or more ;
Her face from summer's noontide heat
No bonnet shaded, but she wore
A mantle, to her very feet
Descending with a graceful flow,
And on her head a cap as white as new-fallen snow.¹

¹ 1846.

She had a tall man's height, or more ;
No bonnet screened her from the heat,
A long drab-coloured cloak she wore,
A mantle reaching to her feet :
What other dress she had I could not know ;
Only she wore a cap that was as white as snow. 1807.

Nor claimed she service from the hood
Of a blue mantle, to her feet

Her skin was of Egyptian brown :
 Haughty, as if her eye had seen
 Its own light to a distance thrown,
 She towered, fit person for a Queen ¹
 To lead those ancient Amazonian files ; ²
 Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand
 And begged an alms with doleful plea

Depending with a graceful flow ;
 Only she wore a cap pure as unsullied snow. 1827.

Before my eyes a Wanderer stood ;
 Her face from summer's noonday heat
 No bonnet shaded, nor the hood
 Of that blue cloak which to her feet
 Depended with a graceful flow ;
 Only she wore a cap as white as new-fallen snow. 1832.

Of the blue cloak 1836.

She had a tall man's height or more ;
 And while mid April's noontide heat
 A long blue cloak the vagrant wore,
 No bonnet screened her lofty brow,
 Only she wore a cap as white as new-fallen snow. C

She had a tall man's height or more ;
 A garment for her stature meet,
 And for a vagrant life she wore
 A mantle reaching to her feet,
 Nor hood, nor bonnet screened her lofty brow,
 Only she wore a cap as white as new-fallen snow. C.

¹ 1827.

In all my walks, through field or town,
 Such Figure had I never seen ;
 Her face was of Egyptian brown :
 Fit person was she for a Queen, 1807.
 Such figure had I never seen
 In all my walks through field or town,
 Fit person seemed she for a Queen,
 To lead, &c. C.

² 1836.

To head those ancient Amazonian files ; 1807.

That ceased not ; on our English land
Such woes, I knew, could never be ;¹
And yet a boon I gave her, for the creature
Was beautiful to see—a weed of glorious feature.

I left her, and pursued my way ;
And soon before me did espy
A pair of little Boys at play,
Chasing a crimson butterfly ;
The taller followed with his hat in hand,
Wreathed round with yellow flowers the gayest of the land.²

The other wore a rimless crown
With leaves of laurel stuck about ;
And, while both followed up and down,³
Each whooping with a merry shout,

¹ 1846.

Before me begging did she stand,
Pouring out sorrows like a sea ;
Grief after grief ; on English land
Such woes I knew could never be ;

1807.

Her suit no faltering scruples checked,
Forth did she pour, in current free,
Tales that could challenge no respect
But from a blind credulity.

1827.

She begged an alms ; no scruple checked
The current of her needy plea,
Words that could challenge no respect
But from a blind credulity.

1842.

Before me begging did she stand,
And boldly urged a doleful plea,
Grief after grief, on English land
Such woes I knew could never be.

C

² 1807.

With yellow flowers around, as with a golden band. c.

³ 1827.

And they both followed up and down,

1807.

In their fraternal features I could trace
Unquestionable lines of that wild Suppliant's face.¹

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit
For finest tasks of earth or air :
Wings let them have, and they might flit
Precursors to Aurora's car,
Scattering fresh flowers ; though happier far, I ween,
To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and level green.²

They dart across my path—but lo,³
Each ready with a plaintive whine !
Said I, “ not half an hour ago
Your Mother has had alms of mine.”
“ That cannot be,” one answered—“ she is dead :”—
I looked reproof—they saw—but neither hung his head.⁴

“ She has been dead, Sir, many a day.”—
“ Hush, boys ! you're telling me a lie ;⁵
It was your Mother as I say ! ”
And, in the twinkling of an eye,

¹ 1820.

Two brothers seemed they, eight and ten years old :
And like that woman's face as gold is like to gold. 1807.

² This stanza added in 1827.

³ 1827.

They bolted on me thus, and lo ! 1807.

⁴ 1827.

“ Nay, but I gave her pence, and she will buy you bread.”
1807.

⁵ 1846.

“ Sweet boys, you're telling me a lie. 1807.

“ Sweet boys, Heaven hears that rash reply. 1827.

“ Sweet boys, you're telling me a lie. 1826.

"Come! Come!" cried one, and without more ado,
Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants flew!¹

¹ 1887.

Off to some other play they both together flew. 1807.
. the thoughtless vagrants flew. c.

The following is Dorothy Wordsworth's reference to this poem in her journal:—"Saturday (March 13, 1802).—W. wrote the poem of the Beggar Woman, taken from a woman whom I had seen in May (now nearly two years ago), when John and he were at Gallow Hill. I sat with him at intervals all the morning, and took down his stanzas." The earlier entry, under date Tuesday, May 27, 1800, is as follows:—"A very tall woman, tall much beyond the measure of tall women, called at the door. She had on a very long brown cloak, and a very white cap, without bonnet. Her face was brown, but it had plainly once been fair. She led a little barefooted child about two years old by the hand, and said her husband, who was a tinker, was gone before with the other children. I gave her a piece of bread. Afterwards, on my road to Ambleside, beside the bridge at Rydal, I saw her husband sitting at the roadside, his two asses standing beside him, and the two young children at play upon the grass. The man did not beg. I passed on, and about a quarter of a mile farther I saw two boys before me, one about ten, the other about eight years old, at play, chasing a butterfly. They were wild figures, not very ragged, but without shoes and stockings. The hat of the elder was wreathed round with yellow flowers; the younger, whose hat was only a rimless crown, had stuck it round with laurel leaves. They continued at play till I drew very near, and then they addressed me with the begging cant and the whining voice of sorrow. I said, 'I served your mother this morning' (the boys were so like the woman who had called at our door that I could not be mistaken). 'O,' says the elder, 'you could not serve my mother, for she's dead, and my father's in at the next town; he's a potter.' I persisted in my assertion, and that I would give them nothing. Says the elder, 'Come, let's away,' and away they flew like lightning. They had, however, sauntered so long in their road that they did not reach Ambleside before me, and I saw them go up to Mathew Harrison's house with their wallet upon the elder's shoulder, and creeping with a beggar's complaining foot. On my return through Ambleside I met, in the street, the mother driving her asses, in the two panniers of one of which were the two little children, whom she was chiding and threatening with a wand with which she used to drive on her asses, while the little things hung in wantonness over the pannier's edge. The woman had told me in the morning that she was of Scotland, which her accent fully proved, and that she had lived (I think at Wigtown); that they could not keep a house, and so they travelled." If this extract from Miss Wordsworth's journal is compared with her brother's poem *Beggars*, it will amply justify the remark of the Bishop of Lincoln.

"His poems are sometimes little more than poetical versions of her descriptions of the objects which she had seen, *and he treated them as seen by himself.*" The sister adds in her journal of March 13, 1802:—"After tea I read W. the account I had written of the little boy belonging to the tall woman: and an unlucky thing it was, for he could not escape from those very words, and so he could not write the poem. He left it unfinished, and went tired to bed. In our walk from Rydal he had got warmed with the subject, and had half cast the poem." "Sunday Morning (March 14).— William had slept badly. He got up at 9 o'clock, but before he rose he had finished the Beggar Boy."

The place referred to in this poem is easily identified.—Ed.

SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING,

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER.

Comp. 1817. ——— Pub. 1827.

In the edition of 1856 the year assigned to this "Sequel" is 1817. It does not occur in the edition of 1820, but was first published in 1827.—Ed.

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys ?
 For whose free range the dædal earth
 Was filled with animated toys,
 And implements of frolic mirth ;
 With tools for ready wit to guide ;
 And ornaments of seemlier pride,
 More fresh, more bright, than princes wear ;
 For what one moment flung aside,
 Another could repair ;
 What good or evil have they seen
 Since I their pastime witnessed herè,
 Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer ?
 I ask—but all is dark between !¹

Spirits of beauty and of grace !
 Associates in that eager chase ;
 Ye, by a course to nature true,
 The sterner judgment can subdue ;
 And waken a relenting smile
 When she encounters fraud or guile ;
 And sometimes ye can charm away
 The inward mischief, or allay,
 Ye, who within the blameless mind
 Your favourite seat of empire find ! In edd. 1827 and 1852.

They met me in a genial hour,
 When universal nature breathed
 As with the breath of one sweet flower,—
 A time to overrule the power
 Of discontent, and check the birth
 Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,
 The most familiar bane of life
 Since parting Innocence bequeathed
 Mortality to Earth !
 Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,
 Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran clear ;
 The lambs from rock to rock were bounding ;
 With songs the budded groves resounding ;
 And to my heart are still endeared
 The thoughts with which it then was cheered ;¹
 The faith which saw that gladsome pair
 Walk through the fire with unsinged hair.
 Or, if such faith must needs deceive—²
 Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,
 Associates in that eager chase ;
 Ye, who within the blameless mind
 Your favourite seat of empire find—³
 Kind Spirits ! may we not believe
 That they, so happy and so fair
 Through your sweet influence, and the care
 Of pitying Heaven, at least were free
 From touch of *deadly* injury ?
 Destined, whate'er their earthly doom,
 For mercy and immortal bloom !

¹ 1836.

And to my heart is still endeared
 The faith with which it then was cheered. 192

² 1836.

As if such thoughts must needs deceive. 1827.

The preceding four lines added in edd. 1836 to 1846.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

Comp. March 14, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Grasmere. My sister and I were parted immediately after the death of our mother, who died in 1778, both being very young.]

STAY near me—do not take thy flight !
 A little longer stay in sight !
 Much converse do I find in thee,
 Historian of my infancy !
 Float near me : do not yet depart !
 Dead times revive in thee :
 Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !
 A solemn image to my heart,
 My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
 The time, when, in our childish plays,
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together chased the butterfly !
 A very hunter did I rush
 Upon the prey :—with leaps and springs
 I followed on from brake to bush ;
 But she, God love her ! feared to brush
 The dust from off its wings.

This poem was never altered. Written at Grasmere in 1802, it refers to the days of childhood spent at Cockermouth before 1778. Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, referred to in the note in the previous poem, continues :—"While we were at breakfast W. wrote the poem to a Butterfly. The thought came upon him as we were talking about the pleasure we both always felt at the sight of a butterfly. I told him that I used to chase them a little, but that I was afraid of brushing the

dust off their wings, and did not catch them. Mr Simpson came in just as he was finishing the poem. After he was gone, I wrote it down, and the other poems, and I read them all over to him." (The "other poems" doubtless refer to *The Singing Bird*, *Alice Fell*, and *Beggars*.) . . . "William began to try to alter the Butterfly, and tired himself."—ED.

THE EMIGRANT MOTHER.

Comp. March 16th and 17th, 1801. — Pub. 1807.

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned
In which a Lady driven from France did dwell;
The big and lesser griefs with which she mourned,
In friendship she to me would often tell.

This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,¹
Where she was childless, daily would repair²
To a poor neighbouring cottage; as I found,
For sake of a young Child whose home was there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond embrace
This Child, I chanted to myself a lay,
Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to trace
Such things as she unto the Babe might say:³

¹ 1845.

. English ground, 1807.

² 1827.

. did repair 1807.

1845.

Once did I see her clasp the child about,
And take it to herself; and I, next day,
Wished in my native tongue to fashion out
Such things as she unto this child might say: 1807.

And thus, from what I heard and knew, or guessed,¹
My song the workings of her heart expressed.

I.

“ Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,
One moment let me be thy mother !
An infant’s face and looks are thine,
And sure a mother’s heart is mine :
Thy own dear mother’s far away,
At labour in the harvest field :
Thy little sister is at play ;—
What warmth, what comfort would it yield
To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be
One little hour a child to me !

II.

Across the waters I am come,
And I have left a babe at home :
A long, long way of land and sea ?
Come to me—I’m no enemy :
I am the same who at thy side
Sate yesterday, and made a nest

Once did I see her take with fond embrace
This infant to herself ; and I, next day,
Endeavoured in my native tongue to trace
Such things as she unto the child might say : 1820.

Once having seen her take with fond embrace
This infant to herself, I framed a lay,
Endeavouring in my native tongue to trace
Such things as she unto the child might say : 1827.

*
¹ 1848.

And thus, from what I knew, had heard, and guessed, .
1807.

For thee, sweet Baby!—thou hast tried,
 Thou know'st the pillow of my breast;
 Good, good art thou:—alas! to me
 Far more than I can be to thee.

III.

Here, little Darling, dost thou lie;
 An infant thou, a mother I!
 Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears;
 Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.
 Alas! before I left the spot,
 My baby and its dwelling-place,
 The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not
 Be shed upon an infant's face,
 It was unlucky'—no, no, no;
 No truth is in them who say so!

IV.

My own dear Little-one will sigh,
 Sweet Babe! and they will let him die.
 'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,
 And you may see his hour is come.'
 Oh! had he but thy cheerful smiles,
 Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,
 Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,
 And countenance like a summer's day,
 They would have hopes of him;—and then
 I should behold his face again!

V.

'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget;
 There was a smile or two—yet—yet¹

¹ 1820.

'Tis gone—forgotten—let me do
 My best—there was a smile or two,

I can remember them—I see
 The smiles, worth all the world to me.
 Dear Baby ! I must lay thee down ;
 Thou troublest me with strange alarms ;
 Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own ;¹
 I cannot keep thee in my arms ;
 For they confound me—where—where is
 That last, that sweetest smile of his ?²

VI.

Oh ! how I love thee !—we will stay
 Together here this one half day.
 My sister's child, who bears my name,
 From France to sheltering England came ;³
 She with her mother crossed the sea ;
 The babe and mother near me dwell :
 Yet does my yearning heart to thee
 Turn rather, though I love her well :⁴

¹ 1827.

. sweet ones of thy own, 1807.

² 1836.

For they confound me ; as it is
 I have forgot those smiles of his. 1807.

For they bewilder me—even now
His smiles are lost,—I know not how. 1820.

By those bewildering glances crost
 In which the light of his is lost. 1827.

³ 1827.

From France across the Ocean came ; 1807.

⁴ 1845.

My Darling, she is not to me
 What thou art ! though I love her well : 1807.

But to my heart she cannot be
 What thou art, though I love her well : 1832.

Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here !
 Never was any child more dear !

VII.

—I cannot help it ; ill intent
 I've none, my pretty Innocent !
 I weep—I know they do thee wrong,
 These tears—and my poor idle tongue.
 Oh, what a kiss was that ! my cheek
 How cold it is ! but thou art good ;
 Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,
 I think, to help me if they could.
 Blessings upon that soft, warm face,¹
 My heart again is in its place !

VIII.

While thou art mine, my little Love,
 This cannot be a sorrowful grove ;
 Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,
 I seem to find them all in thee :
 Here's grass to play with, here are flowers ;
 I'll call thee by my darling's name ;
 Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,
 Thy features seem to me the same ;
 His little sister thou shalt be ;
 And, when once more my home I see,
 I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

In edd 1807 and 1815, this poem had no distinctive title ; but it was known, in the Wordsworth circle, as *The Emigrant Mother* from 1802. It was first published under that name in 1820. It was revised and altered in 1827, 1832, 1836, and more especially in 1845.

In Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal the following entries occur :—
 “*Tuesday* (March 16).—William went up into the orchard, and wrote a part of the *Emigrant Mother*.” “*Wednesday*.—William went up into the orchard, and finished the poem. . . I went and sate with W., and walked backwards and forwards in the orchard till dinner-time. He read me his poem.”—ED.

MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD;

OR, THE RAINBOW.

Comp. March 26, 1802. ——— Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere.]

My heart leaps up when I behold
 A rainbow in the sky :
 So was it when my life began ;
 So is it now I am a man ;
 So be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die !
 The Child is father of the Man ;
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.

“March 26, 1802.—W. wrote the *Rainbow*” (Dorothy Wordsworth Journal).

“I am informed that these lines (*The Rainbow*) have been cited as specimen of despicable puerility. So much the worse for the citer ; no willingly in *his* presence would I behold the sun setting behind our mountains. . . . But let the dead bury their dead ! The poet sang for the living. . . I was always pleased with the motto placed under the figure of the rosemary in old herbals—

‘Sus, apage ! Haud tibi spiro.’”

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, in *The Friend*, Vol. I., p. 58.—ED.

AMONG ALL LOVELY THINGS MY LOVE HAD
BEEN.

Comp. April 12, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

AMONG all lovely things my Love had been ;
Had noted well the stars, all flowers that grew
About her home ; but she had never seen
A glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.

While riding near her home one stormy night
A single glow-worm did I chance to espy ;
I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,
And from my horse I leapt ; great joy had I.

Upon a leaf the glow-worm did I lay,
To bear it with me through the stormy night :
And, as before, it shone without dismay ;
Albeit putting forth a fainter light.

When to the dwelling of my Love I came,
I went into the orchard quietly ;
And left the glow-worm, blessing it by name,
Laid safely by itself, beneath a tree.

The whole next day, I hoped, and hoped with fear ;
At night the glow-worm shone beneath the tree ;
I led my Lucy to the spot, "Look here,"
Oh ! joy it was for her, and joy for me !

This poem—known in the Wordsworth household as *The Glowworm*—was written on the 12th of April 1802, during a ride from Middleham to Barnard Castle, and was published in the edition of 1807. It was never reproduced. The "Lucy" of this and other poems was his Sister Dorothy. In a letter to Coleridge, written in April 1802, he

thus refers to the poem, and to the incident which gave rise to it :—
 “I parted from M—— on Monday afternoon, about six o'clock, a little on this side Rushyford. Soon after I missed my road in the midst of the storm. Between the beginning of Lord Darlington's park at Raby, and two or three miles beyond Staindrop, I composed the poem on the opposite page. I reached Barnard Castle about half-past ten. . . . The incident of this poem took place about seven years ago between my sister and me.” In the beginning of the year 1795—seven years before — Wordsworth was at Penrith attending his friend Raisley Calvert in his last illness (having spent most of the previous year in the Lake country). In the autumn of 1795 he settled at Racedown, Dorsetshire, with his sister. The following is Dorothy Wordsworth's account of the composition of the poem :—“Tuesday, April 20, 1802.—We sate in the orchard and repeated the Glowworm, and other poems. Just when William came to a well, or trough, which there is in Lord Darlington's park, he began to write that poem of the Glowworm. He finished it about two miles and a-half beyond Staindrop. . . So much for the Glowworm. It was written coming from Middleham, on Monday, April 12, 1802.”—ED.

WRITTEN IN MARCH,

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER.

Comp. April 16, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Extempore. This little poem was a favourite with Joanna Baillie.]

THE Cock is crowing,
 The stream is flowing,
 The small birds twitter,
 The lake doth glitter,
 The green field sleeps in the sun ;
 The oldest and youngest
 Are at work with the strongest ;
 The cattle are grazing,
 Their heads never raising ;
 There are forty feeding like one !

Like an army defeated
 The snow hath retreated,

And now doth fare ill
 On the top of the bare hill ;
 The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon :
 There's joy in the mountains ;
 There's life in the fountains ;
 Small clouds are sailing,
 Blue sky prevailing ;
 The rain is over and gone !

This poem, like the two preceding ones, was never altered. It was not "written in March" but on the 16th of April (Good Friday) 1802. The bridge referred to crosses Goldrill Beck, a little below Hartsop in Patterdale. The following is from Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary. It records the walk from Ullswater, over Kirkstone Pass, to Ambleside:—"Friday, 16th April (Good Friday).--When I undrew the curtains in the morning, I was much affected by the beauty of the prospect and the change. The sun shone, the wind had passed away, the hills looked cheerful. The river was very bright as it flowed into the lake. The church rises up behind a little knot of rocks, the steeple not so high as an ordinary three story house: trees in a row in the garden under the wall. We set forward. The valley is at first broken by little rocky, woody knolls, that make retiring places, fairy valleys in the vale. The river winds along under these hills, travelling not in a bustle, but not slowly, to the lake. We saw a fisherman in the flat meadow on the other side of the water. He came towards us, and threw his line over the two-arched bridge. It is a bridge of a heavy construction, almost bending inwards in the middle; but it is grey, and there is a look of ancients in the architecture of it that pleased me. As we go on the vale opens out more into one vale, with somewhat of a cradle bed. Cottages, with groups of trees on the side of the hills. We passed a pair of twin children two years old; sate on the next bridge which we crossed, a single arch. We rested again upon the turf, and looked at the same bridge. We observed arches in the water, occasioned by the large stones sending it down in two streams. A sheep came plunging through the river, stumbled up the bank, and passed close to us. It had been frightened by an insignificant little dog on the other side. Its fleece dropped a glittering shower under its belly. Primroses by the roadside; pilewort that shone like stars of gold in the sun; violets, strawberries retired and half buried among the grass. When we came to the foot of Brother's Water, I left William sitting on the bridge, and went along the path on the right side of the lake through the wood. I was delighted with what I saw: the water under the boughs of the bare old trees, the simplicity of the mountains, and the exquisite beauty of the path. There was one grey cottage. I

repeated the Glowworm as I walked along. I hung over the gate, and thought I could have stayed for ever. When I returned, I found William writing a poem descriptive of the sights and sounds we saw and heard. There was the gentle flowing of the stream, the glittering lively lake, green fields, without a living creature to be seen on them ; behind us, a flat pasture with forty-two cattle feeding ; to our left, the road leading to the hamlet. No smoke there, the sun shone on the bare roofs. The people were at work, ploughing, harrowing, and sowing ; lasses working ; a dog barking now and then ; cocks crowing, birds twittering ; the snow in patches at the top of the highest hills ; yellow palms, purple and green twigs on the birches, ashes with their glittering stems quite bare. The hawthorn a bright green, with black stems under the oak. The moss of the oaks glossy. As we went up the vale of Brother's Water, more and more cattle feeding, a hundred of them. William finished his poem before we got to the foot of Kirkstone. There were hundreds of cattle in the vale. The walk up Kirkstone was very interesting. The beck among the rocks were all alive. William shewed me the little mossy streamlet which he had before loved, when he saw its bright green track in the snow. The view above Ambleside very beautiful. There we sate, and looked down on the green vale. We watched the crows at a little distance from us become white as silver, as they flew in the sunshine ; and, when they went still farther, they looked like shapes of water passing over the green fields."—ED.

THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY.

Comp. April 18, 1802. ——— Pub. 1807.

[Observed, as described, in the then beautiful orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.]

The edition of 1857 assigns this poem to the year 1806, and it is so placed in the chronological table, in the first volume of the present edition ; but, in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, I find, under date "Sunday, 18th" (April 1802), the following note :—"A mild grey morning with rising vapours. We sate in the orchard. William wrote the poem on the Robin and the Butterfly. . . . W. met me at Rydal with the conclusion of the poem to the Robin. I read it to him in bed. We left out some lines." That this was the correct date of the composition of the poem is made more evident by the note two days later :—"Tuesday, 20th.—W. wrote a conclusion to the poem of the Butterfly, 'I've watched you now a full half-hour.'"—ED.

ART thou the bird whom Man loves best,
 The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
 Our little English Robin ;
 The bird that comes about our doors
 When Autumn-winds are sobbing ?
 Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors ?
 Their Thomas in Finland,
 And Russia far inland ?
 The bird that by some name or other¹
 All men who know thee call their brother.
 The darling of children and men ?
 Could Father Adam* open his eyes
 And see this sight beneath the skies,
 He'd wish to close them again.
 —If the Butterfly knew but his friend,
 Hither his flight he would bend ;
 And find his way to me,
 Under the branches of the tree :
 In and out, he darts about ;
 Can this be the bird, to man so good,
 That after their bewildering,²

¹ 1810.

The bird whom by some		1807
. who		1827

² 1815.

In and out, he darts about ;	
His little heart is throbbing :	
Can this be the bird to man so good,	
Our consecrated Robin !	
That, after, &c.,	1807.

* See Paradise Lost, Book XI., when Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the Eagle chasing “two Birds of gayest plume,” and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy. 1815.

Covered with leaves the little children,¹
So painfully in the wood ?

What ailed thee, Robin, that thou could'st pursue
A beautiful creature,
That is gentle by nature ?
Beneath the summer sky
From flower to flower let him fly ;
'Tis all that he wishes to do.
The cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness,
He is the friend of our summer gladness :
What hinders, then, that ye should be
Playmates in the sunny weather,
And fly about in the air together !
His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,
A crimson as bright as thine own : ²
Would'st thou be happy in thy nest, ³
O pious Bird ! whom man loves best,
Love him, or leave him alone !

TO A BUTTERFLY.

Comp. April 20, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.]

I've watch'd you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower :

1832.

Did cover with leaves . . .

1807.

1815.

Like the hues of thy breast,
His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,
A brother he seems of thine own :

1807.

1836.

If thou would'st be happy in thy nest,

1807.

And, little Butterfly ! indeed
 I know not if you sleep or feed.
 How motionless !—not frozen seas
 More motionless ! and then
 What joy awaits you, when the breeze
 Hath found you out among the trees,
 And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard-ground is ours ;
 My trees they are, my Sister's flowers,
 Here rest your wings when they are weary ;
 Here lodge as in a sanctuary !¹
 Come often to us, fear no wrong ;
 Sit near us on the bough !
 We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
 And summer days, when we were young ;
 Sweet childish days, that were as long
 As twenty days are now.

Many of the flowers in the orchard at Dove Cottage were planted by Dorothy Wordsworth. The "summer days" of childhood are referred to in the previous poem *To a Butterfly*, written on the 14th of March 1802. See also note to previous poem, *The Redbreast Chasing the Butterfly* (p. 264).—ED.

FORESIGHT ;

OR, CHILDREN GATHERING FLOWERS.

Comp. April 28, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

Also composed in the Orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.]

THAT is work of waste and ruin—²
 Do as Charles and I are doing !

¹ 1815.

Stop here whenever you are weary,
 And rest as in a sanctuary !

1807.

² 1815.

That is work which I am rueing,

1807.

Strawberry-blossoms, one and all
 We must spare them—here are many :
 Look at it—the flower is small,
 Small and low, though fair as any :
 Do not touch it ! summers two
 I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne !
 Pull as many as you can.
 —Here are daisies, take your fill ;
 Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower :
 Of the lofty daffodil
 Make your bed, or ¹ make your bower ;
 Fill your lap, and fill your bosom ;
 Only spare the strawberry-blossom !

Primroses, the Spring may love them—
 Summer knows but little of them :
 Violets, a barren kind,²
 Withered on the ground must lie ;
 Daisies leave no fruit behind
 When the pretty flowerets die ;
 Pluck them, and another year
 As many will be blowing here.³

God has given a kindlier power
 To the favoured strawberry-flower.

¹ 1838.

. . . and make 1807.

² 1815.

Violets, do what they will, 1807.

³ 1815.

Daisies will be daisies still :
 Daisies they must live and die :
 Fill your lap, and fill your bosom,
 Only spare the strawberry-blossom 1807.

Hither soon as spring is fled
 You and Charles and I will walk ;¹
 Lurking berries, ripe and red,
 Then will hang on every stalk,
 Each within its leafy bower ;
 And for that promise spare the flower !²

" *Wednesday*, 28th April (1802).—Copied the Prioress's Tale. Wm. was in the orchard. He worked away at his poem, though he was ill, and tired. I happened to say that when I was a child I would not have pulled a strawberry blossom ; I left him, and wrote out the Manciple's Tale. At dinner time he came in with the poem of 'Children gathering flowers,' but it was not quite finished, and it kept him long from his dinner. It is now done. He is working at the Tinker." (Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary). At an earlier date in the same year,—Jan. 31st, 1802,—the following occurs in the same Diary : " I found a strawberry blossom in a rock. The little slender flower had more courage than the green leaves, for *they* were but half expanded and half grown, but the blossoms was spread full out. I uprooted it rashly, and I felt as if I had been committing an outrage ; so I planted it again. It will have but a stormy life of it, but let it live if it can."—ED.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.*

Comp. April 30, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasnuere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air.]

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises ;

¹ 1886.

When the months of spring are fled,
 Hither let us bend our walk ;

1815.

² The last stanza was added in ed. 1815.

Long as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory ;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story :
 There's a flower that shall be mine,
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star ;
 Up and down the heavens they go,
 Men that keep a mighty rout !
 I'm as great as they, I trow,
 Since the day I found thee out,
 Little Flower !—I'll make a stir,
 Like a sage astronomer.¹

Modest, yet withal an Elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
 Since we needs must first have met
 I have seen thee, high and low,
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'Twas a face I did not know ;
 Thou hast now, go where I may,
 Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
 In the time before the thrush
 Has a thought about her nest,²
 Thou wilt come with half a call
 Spreading out thy glossy breast
 Like a careless Prodigal ;

¹ 1836.

Like a great astronomer.

1807.

² 1832.

. about its nest,

1807.

Telling tales about the sun,
When we've little warinth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood !
Travel with the multitude :
Never heed them ; I aver
That they all are wanton wooers ;
But the thrifty cottager,
Who stirs little out of doors,
Joys to spy thee near her home ;
Spring is coming. Thou art come !

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
Kindly, unassuming Spirit !
Careless of thy neighbourhood,
Thou dost show thy pleasant face
On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane ;—there's not a place,
Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
Children of the flaring hours !
Buttercups, that will be seen,
Whether we will see or no ;
Others, too, of lofty mien ;
They have done as worldlings do,
Taken praise that should be thine,
Little, humble Celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,
Ill-requited upon earth ;¹

¹ 1836.

Scorned and slighted upon earth.

1807.

• Herald of a mighty band,
 Of a joyous train ensuing,
 Serving at my heart's command,
 Tasks that are no tasks renewing,¹
 I will sing, as doth behove,
 Hymns in praise of what I love !

In Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal* the following occurs, under date *April 30* :—"We came into the orchard directly after breakfast, and sat there. The lake was calm, the sky cloudy. W. began to write the poem of the *Celandine*. . . . I walked backwards and forwards with William. He repeated his poem to me. Then he got to work again, and would not give over." Saturday, *May 1*.—"A heavenly morning. We went into the garden, and sowed the scarlet beans about the house. It was a clear sky. I sowed the flowers, William helped me. We then went and sat in the orchard till dinner time. It was very hot. William wrote the *Celandine*. We planned a shed, for the sun was too much for us."

We have no other information as to the date of the composition of the two poems *To the Small Celandine*. Founding on it in the chronological table, I assigned the first of them to the 30th of April, and the second to the 1st of May. The poems resemble each other in theme and structure, and might almost stand as the first and second parts of the same poem. We may at least apply to them what Wordsworth says of his second and third poems *To the Daisy*, in a note to the edition of 1807 :—"These poems were overflowings of the mind, in composing the one which stands first in the first volume." The above was written before I had access to Miss Wordsworth's *Grasmere Journal*. In it I find the conjecture confirmed. "*May 1st*.—Wm. wrote the *Celandine*, second part."—Ed.

TO THE SAME FLOWER.

Comp. May 1, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
 When they lie about our feet :
 February last, my heart
 First at sight of thee was glad ;

1836.

Singing at my heart's command,
 In the lanes my thoughts pursuing,

1807.

All unheard of as thou art,
Thou must needs, I think, have had,
Celandine ! and long ago,
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
Whosoe'er the man might be,
Who the first with pointed rays
(Workman worthy to be sainted)
Set the sign-board in a blaze,
When the rising sun he painted,
Took the fancy from a glance
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring
News of winter's vanishing,
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sighed to think, I read a book,
Only read, perhaps, by me ;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and Thee,
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

. Blithe of heart, from week to week
Thou dost play at hide-and-sseek ;

While the patient primrose sits
 Like a beggar in the cold,
 Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
 Slip'st into thy sheltering hold ;¹
 Liveliest of the vernal train ²
 When ye are all out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
 By what charm of sight or smell,
 Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
 Labouring for her waxen cells,
 Fondly settle upon Thee,
 Prized above all buds and bells
 Opening daily at thy side,
 By the season multiplied ?

Thou art not beyond the moon,
 But a thing "beneath our shoon :"
 Let the bold Discoverer thrid
 In his bark the polar sea ;³

¹ 1832.

Slipp'st into thy sheltered hold.

1807.

² 1846.

Bright as any of the train

1807.

³ 1846.

Let, as old Magellen did,
 Others roam about the sea ;

1807.

. Magellan

1815.

Let, with bold adventurers' skill,
 Others thrid the polar sea ;

1820.

Let the bold adventurer thrid
 In his bark the polar sea ;

1827.

Rear who will a pyramid ;
Praise it is enough for me,
If there be but three or four
Who will love my little Flower.

THE LEECH-GATHERER ;

OR, RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

Comp. May 7, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This old man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage ; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr Clarkson's, at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell.]

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night ;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods ;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright ;
The birds are singing in the distant woods ;
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods ;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters ;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

II.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;
The grass is bright with rain-drops ;—on the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth ;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist ; that,¹ glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

¹ 1827.

III.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,
I saw the hare that raced about with joy ;
I heard the woods and distant waters roar ;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy :
The pleasant season did my heart employ :
My old remembrances went from me wholly ;
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

IV.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low ;
To me that morning did it happen so ;
And fears and fancies thick upon me came ;
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor could name.

V.

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky ,¹
And I bethought me of the playful hare ;
Even such a happy Child of earth am I ;
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
Far from the world I walk, and from all care ;
But there may come another day to me—
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

VI.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood ;
As if all needful things would come unsought

¹ 1820.

I heard the sky-lark singing in the sky ;

1807.

To genial faith, still rich in genial good :
 But how can He expect that others should
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all ?

VII.

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
 The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride ;¹
 Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
 Following his plough, along the mountain-side :²
 By our own spirits are we defied :
 We Poets in our youth begin in gladness ;
 But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

VIII.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befel that, in this lonely place,
 When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
 Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven ³
 I saw a Man before me unawares :
 The oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

⁴ IX.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
 Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
 Wonder to all who do the same espy,

¹ 1815.

. perished in its pride ; 1807

² 1820.

Behind his plough, upon the mountain-side : 1807

³ 1820.When up and down my fancy thus was driven,
 And I with these untoward thoughts had striven, 1807.⁴My course I stopped as soon as I espied
 The old man in that naked wilderness ;
 Close by a Pond, upon the further side,

By what means it could thither come, and whence ;
 So that it seems a thing endued with sense :
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
 Of rock or sand repositeth, there to sun itself ;

X.

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,
 Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age :
 His body was bent double, feet and head
 Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;¹
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
 Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
 A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

XI.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,²
 Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood :
 And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
 Upon the margin of that moorish flood³
 Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
 That heareth not the loud winds when they call ;
 And moveth all together, if it move at all.

He stood alone ; a minute's space I guess
 I watched him, he continuing motionless :
 To the Pool's further margin then I drew ;
 He being all the while before me full in view.

Added in edd 1807 and 1815.

¹ 1827.

Coming together in their pilgrimage ; 1807.

² 1836.

Himself he propped, his body, limbs, and face, 1807.

³ 1820.

Beside the little pond or moorish flood 1807.

XII.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
 Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
 Upon the muddy water, which he conned,
 As if he had been reading in a book ;
 And now a stranger's privilege I took ;¹
 And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
 " This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

XIII.

A gentle answer did the old Man make,
 In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew :
 And him with further words I thus bespake,
 " What occupation do you there pursue ? ²
 This is a lonesome place for one like you."
 Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes.³

XIV.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
 But each in solemn order followed each,
 With something of a lofty utterance drest—
 ('hoice word and measured phrase, above the reach
 Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;
 Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
 Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

¹ 1820.

And now such freedom as I could I took ; 1807.

² 1820.

" What kind of work is that which you pursue ! " 1807.

³ 1836.

He answered me with pleasure and surprise ;
 And there was, while he spake, a fire about his eyes.

1807.

He answered, while a flash of mild surprise
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes. 1820.

XV.

He told, that ~~to~~ these waters he had come ¹
 To gather leeches, being old and poor :
 Employment hazardous and wearisome !
 And he had many hardships to endure :
 From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor ;
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;
 And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

XVI.

The old Man still stood talking by my side ;
 But now his voice to me was like a stream
 Scarce heard ; nor word from word could I divide ;
 And the whole body of the Man did seem
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream ;
 Or like a man from some far region sent,
 To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.²

XVII.

My former thoughts returned : the fear that kills ;
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed ,
 Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills ;
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
 —Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,³
 My question eagerly did I renew,
 “ How is it that you live, and what is it you do ? ”

¹ 1827.

He told me that he to this pond had come.

1807.

² 1827

. . . . and strong admonishment.

1807.

. . . . by strong admonishment.

1820.

³ 1820.

And now, not knowing what the Old Man said,

1807.

But now, perplexed by what the Old Man had said,

1815.

XVIII.

He with a smile did then his words repeat
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
 He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
 The waters of the pools¹ where they abide.
 "Once I could meet with them on every side;
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.

XIX.

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all troubled me:
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
 About the weary moors continually,
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

XX.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,
 But stately in the main; and when he ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
 "God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!"

"May 7.—W. wrote the Leech-Gatherer" (Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary). The pool, "bare to the eye of heaven," is doubtless the small pool on White Moss Common. In an earlier journal, under date Friday, 3d October 1800, the Sister writes:—"N.B. When Wm. and I returned from accompanying Jones, we met an old man almost double. He had

¹ 1827.

on a coat thrown over his shoulders above his waistcoat and coat. Under this he carried a bundle, and had an apron on, and a night-cap. His face was interesting. He had dark eyes, and a long nose. John, who afterwards met him at Wythburn, took him for a Jew. He was of Scotch parents, but had been born in the army. He had had a wife, 'and a good woman, and it pleased God to bless him with ten children.' All these were dead but one, of whom he had not heard for many years, a sailor. His trade was to gather leeches; but now leeches were scarce, and he had not strength for it. He lived by begging, and was making his way to Carlisle where he would buy a few books to sell. He said leeches were very scarce, partly owing to this dry season; but many years they had been scarce. He supposed it owing to their being much sought after; that they did not breed fast; and were of slow growth. Leeches were formerly 2s. 6d. the 100; now they were 30s. He had been hurt in driving a cart, his leg broken, his body driven over, his skull fractured. He felt no pain till he recovered from his first insensibility. It was late in the evening, when the light was just going away."

Wordsworth's own note on this poem illustrates his habit of blending in one description details which were originally separate, both as to time and place. The scenery and the incidents of the poem are alike composite. As he tells us that he met the leech-gatherer a few hundred yards from Dove Cottage, the "lonely place" with its "pool, bare to the eye of heaven," at once suggests White Moss Common and its small tarn or pool. But he adds that, in the opening stanzas of the poem, he is describing a state of feeling he was in, when crossing the Fells at the foot of Ullswater to Askam, and that the image of the hare "running races in her mirth," with the glittering mist accompanying her, was observed by him, not on White Moss Common, but in one of the ridges of Moor Divoek.—Ed.

"I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTÉ, &c."

Comp. May 21, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[In the cottage of Town-end, one afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion with the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that runs through most of them—in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakespeare's fine sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote, except an irregular one at school. Of these three the only one I distinctly remember is 'I grieved for Buonaparte, &c.'; one of the others was never written down; the third, which was I believe preserved, I cannot particularise.]

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
 And an unthinking grief! The tenderest mood¹
 Of that Man's mind—what can it be? what food
 Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could *he* gain?
 'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
 The Governor who must be wise and good,
 And temper, with the sternness of the brain
 Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
 Wisdom doth live with children round her knees:
 Books, less, perfect freedom, and the talk
 Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
 Of the mind's business; these are the degrees
 By which true Sway doth mount; this is the stalk
 True Power doth grow on; and her rights are these.

"May 21.—W. wrote two sonnets on Buonaparte, after I had read Milton's sonnets to him" (Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary).

The "irregular" sonnet written "at school" to which Wordsworth refers in the Fenwick note to this poem, is doubtless the sonnet published in the *European Magazine* in 1787, Vol. XI. p. 302, and signed Axiologus.—ED.

A FAREWELL.

Comp. May 29, 1802. — Pub. 1815.

[Composed just before my Sister and I went to fetch Mrs Wordsworth from Gallow-hill, near Scarborough.]

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-ground
 Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
 Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
 One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare;

¹ 1836.

. The vital blood
 Of that man's mind

1807.

. For, who aspires
 To genuine greatness but from just desires,
 And knowledge such as *he* could never gain?

1815.

Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
 The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
 Farewell!—we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care
 Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
 And there will safely ride when we are gone;
 The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
 Will prosper, though untended and alone:
 Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none:
 These narrow bounds contain our private store
 Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon;
 Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell!
 For two months now in vain we shall be sought;
 We leave you here in solitude to dwell
 With these our latest gifts of tender thought;
 Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
 Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell!
 Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
 And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear;
 And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,
 Our own contrivance, Building without peer!
 —A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
 Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,
 With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
 Will come to you;¹ to you herself will wed;
 And love the blessed life that we lead here.

¹ 1820.

Dear spot! which we have watched with tender heed,
 Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
 Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
 Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
 Making all kindness registered and known;
 Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
 Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
 Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
 That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
 To them who look not daily on thy face;¹
 Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
 And say'st, when we forsake thee, "Let them go!"
 Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
 Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
 And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,
 And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best;
 Joy will be flown in its mortality;
 Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
 Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's breast
 Glittered at evening like a starry sky;
 And in this bush our sparrow² built her nest,
 Of which I sang² one song that will not die.

O happy Garden! whose seclusion deep
 Hath been so friendly to industrious hours;
 And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
 Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers,

¹ 1827.

. in thy face; 1815.

² 1836.

Of which I sung 1815.

And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers ;
 Two burning months let summer overleap,
 And, coming back with Her who will be ours,
 Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

This "little nook of mountain-ground" is in very much the same condition as it was in 1802. The "flowering shrubs" and the "rocky well" still exist, and "the steep rock's breast" is "thronged with prim-roses" in spring, although the "Bower" is gone, and where it used to be a seat is now erected. "*May 29.*—W. wrote his poem on going to M. H. I wrote it out" (Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary).—ED.

THE SUN HAS LONG BEEN SET.

Comp. June 8, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[This *Inpromptu* appeared, many years ago, among the Author's poems, from which, in subsequent editions, it was excluded. It is reprinted, at the request of the Friend in whose presence the lines were thrown off.]

THE sun has long been set,
 The stars are out by twos and threes,
 The little birds are piping yet
 Among the bushes and trees ;
 There's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,
 And a far-off wind that rushes,
 And a sound of water that gushes,¹
 And the cuckoo's sovereign cry
 Fills all the hollow of the sky.
 Who would "go parading"
 In London. "and masquerading,"
 On such a night of June
 With that beautiful soft half-moon,
 And all these innocent blisses ?
 On such a night as this is !

"*June 8th* (1802).—W. wrote the poem, 'The sun has long been set'" (Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary). The "Friend in whose presence the lines were thrown off," was his sister.—ED.

¹ 1836.

And a noise of wind that rushes,
 With a noise of water that gushes ;

1807.

SONNETS.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802.

Comp. July 30, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Written on the roof of a coach, on my way to France.]

EARTH has not any thing to show more fair :
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty :
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear
 The beauty of the morning : silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
 The river glideth at his own sweet will :
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still !

The date which Wordsworth gave to this poem on its first publication in 1807, and which he retained in all subsequent editions of his works, is inaccurate. He left London for Dover, on his way to Calais on the 30th of July 1802. The sonnet was written that morning as he travelled towards Dover. The following is the record of the journey in his sister's diary :—" *July 30.*—Left London between five and six o'clock of the morning outside the Dover coach. A beautiful morning. The city, St Paul's, with the river—a multitude of little boats, made a beautiful sight as we crossed *Westminster Bridge* ; the houses not overhung by their clouds of smoke, and were spread out endlessly ; yet the sun shone so brightly, with such a pure light, that there was something like the purity of one of Nature's own grand spectacles." This sonnet underwent no change in the successive editions of the works.

In illustration of it, the following anecdote of the late Bishop of St David's may be quoted. It is reported by Lord Coleridge. "In the great debate on the abolition of the Irish Establishment in 1869, the Bishop of St David's, Dr Thirlwall, had made a very remarkable speech,

and had been kept till past daybreak in the House of Lords, before the division was over, and he was able to walk home. He was then an old man, and in failing health. Some days after, he was asked whether he had not run some risk to his health, and whether he did not feel much exhausted. 'Yes,' he said, 'perhaps so; but I was more than repaid by walking out upon Westminster Bridge after the division, seeing London in the morning light as Wordsworth saw it, and repeating to myself his noble sonnet as I walked home.' This anecdote was told to the Wordsworth Society, at its meeting on the 3rd of May 1882, after a letter recording the following somewhat similar experience had been read. ". . . As confirming the perfect truth of Wordsworth's description of the external aspects of a scene, and the way in which he reached its inmost soul, I may tell you what happened to me, and may have happened to many others. Many years ago, I think it was in 1859, I chanced to be passing (in a pained and depressed state of mind, occasioned by the death of a friend) over Waterloo Bridge at half-past three on a lovely June morning. It was broad daylight, and I was alone. Never when alone in the remotest recesses of the Alps, with nothing around me but the mountains, or upon the plains of Africa, alone with the wonderful glory of the southern night, have I seen anything to approach the solemnity—the soothing solemnity—of the city, sleeping under the early sun—

'Earth hath not anything to show more fair.'

How simply, yet how perfectly Wordsworth has interpreted it! It was a happy thing for us that the Dover coach left at so untimely an hour. It was this sonnet, I think, that first opened my eyes to Wordsworth's greatness as a poet. Perhaps nothing that he has written shows more strikingly that vast sympathy which is his peculiar dower."—(ROBERT SPENCE WATSON.)—ED.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

Comp. August, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the west,
 Star of my Country!—on the horizon's brink
 Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
 On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest,
 Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
 Should'st be my Country's emblem; and should'st wink,

Bright Star ! with laughter on her banners, drest
 In thy fresh beauty. There ! that dusky spot
 Beneath thee, that is England ; there she lies.¹
 Blessings be on you both ! one hope, one lot,
 One life, one glory !—I, with many a fear
 For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
 Among men who do not love her, linger here.

This sonnet, and the seven that follow it, were written during Wordsworth's residence at Calais, in the month of August, 1802. The following extract from his sister's journal illustrates it :—"Arrived at *Calais* at four in the morning of July 31st. Delightful walks in the evenings ; seeing far off in the west the coast of England, like a cloud, crested with Dover Castle, the evening Star, and the glory of the sky : the reflections in the water were more beautiful than the sky itself ; purple waves brighter than precious stones for ever melting away upon the sands."—ED.

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

Comp. August 7, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
 Or what is it that ye go forth to see ?
 Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,
 Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame, and blind,
 Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,
 With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee
 In France, before the new-born Majesty.
 'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,
 A seemly reverence may be paid to power ;
 But that's a loyal virtue, never sown
 In haste, nor springing with a transient shower :
 When truth, when sense, when liberty were flown,
 What hardship had it been to wait an hour ?
 Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone !

¹ 1836.

Beneath thee, it is England ; there it lies.

1807.

JONES ! AS FROM CALAIS SOUTHWARD YOU AND I.

COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ANDRES.

Comp. August, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

JONES ! as from Calais southward you and I¹
 Went pacing side by side, this public Way
 Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day *
 When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty :²
 A homeless sound of joy was in the sky :
 From hour to hour the antiquated Earth³
 Beat like the heart of Man : songs, garlands, mirth,⁴
 Banners and happy faces, far and nigh !
 And now, sole register that these things were,
 Two solitary greetings have I heard,
 “ *Good-morrow, Citizen !* ” a hollow word,
 As if a dead man spake it ! Yet despair

¹ 1836.

.	.	when from Calais	.	.	.	1807.
.	.	while	.	.	.	1820.

² 1836.

Travelled on foot together ; then this way, Which I am pacing now, was like the May With festivals of new-born Liberty :	1807.
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Urged our ascendant steps, this public way Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day, When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty :	1820.
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³ 1845.

The antiquated Earth, as one might say,	1807.
The antiquated Earth, hopeful and gay,	1836.

⁴ 1845.

.	.	.	.	.	.	garlands play,	1807.
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* 14th July 1790.

Touches me not, though pensive as a bird
Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.¹

This sonnet is addressed to Robert Jones, of Plas-yn-llan, near Ruthin, Denbighshire, a brother collegian at Cambridge, and afterwards a fellow of St John's College, and incumbent of Soulderne, near Deddington, in Oxfordshire. It was to this friend that Wordsworth dedicated his *Descriptive Sketches*, which record their wanderings together in Switzerland; and it is to the pedestrian tour, undertaken by the two friends in the long vacation of 1790, that he refers in the above sonnet. The character of his friend is sketched in the poem, written in 1800, beginning,

"I marvel how Nature could ever find space,"
and his parsonage in Oxfordshire is described in the sonnet,
"Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
Is marked by no distinguishable line."

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802.

Comp. August 15, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not names :
This is young Buonaparté's natal day,
And his is henceforth an established sway—
Consul for life. With worship France proclaims
Her approbation, and with pomps and games.
Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay !
Calais is not : and I have bent my way
To the sea-coast, noting that each man frames
His business as he likes. Far other show
My youth here witnessed, in a prouder time :²

¹ 1827.

. Yet despair
I feel not : happy am I as a Bird ;
Fair seasons yet will come, and hopes as fair. 1807.

. Yet despair
I feel not : jocund as a warbling Bird ;
. 1820.

² 1827.

. Another time
That was, when I was here long years ago : 1807.
. Far different time
That was, which here I witnessed long ago : 1820

The senselessness of joy was then sublime !
 Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,
 Consul, or King, can sound himself to know
 The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

COMPOSED ON THE BEACH NEAR CALAIS.

Comp. August, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,¹
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :²
 Listen !³ the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
 Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me here,
 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

[This was composed on the beach near Calais, in the autumn of 1802.]

The above is the Fenwick note to this sonnet. It is to his sister that Wordsworth refers, in the line beginning "Dear child."—ED.

¹ 1807.

Air sleeps,—from strife or stir the clouds are free,	1836.
A fairer face of evening cannot be,	1842.
It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,	1846.
(Returning to 1807.)	

² 1836.

The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea ;	1807.
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³ 1807.

But list !	1836.
Listen !	1842.
(Returning to 1807.)	

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

Comp. August, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in fee ;
 And was the safeguard of the west : the worth
 Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
 She was a maiden City, bright and free ;
 No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
 And, when she took unto herself a mate,
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ;
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reached its final day :
 Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
 Of that which once was great, is passed away.

“ Once did She hold the gorgeous east in fee.”

The special glory of Venice dates from the conquest of Constantinople by the Latins in 1202. The fourth Crusade—in which the French and Venetians alone took part—started from Venice, in October 1202, under the command of the Doge, Henry Dandolo. Its destiny, however, was not the recovery of Palestine, but the conquest of Constantinople. At the close of the crusade, Venice received the Morea, part of Thessaly, the Cyclades, many of the Bysantine cities, and the coasts of the Helles pont, with three-eighths of the city of Constantinople itself, the Doge taking the curious title of Duke of three-eighths of the Roman Empire.

“ And was the safeguard of the west.”

This may refer to the prominent part which Venice took in the Crusades, or to the development of her naval power, which made her mistress of the Mediterranean for many years, and an effective bulwark against invasions from the East.

“ The eldest Child of Liberty.”

The origin of the Venetian State was the flight of many of the inhabitants of the mainland—on the invasion of Italy by Attila—to the chain of islands that lie at the head of the Adriatic. “ In the midst of the waters, free, indigent, laborious, and inaccessible, they gradually

coalesced into a republic : the first foundations of Venice were laid in the island of Rialto. . . . On the verge of the two empires the Venetians exult in the belief of primitive and perpetual independence.”—Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. lx.

“And, when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.”

In 1177, Pope Alexander III. appealed to the Venetian Republic for protection against the German Emperor. The Venetians were successful in a naval battle at Saboro, against Otho, the son of Frederick Barbarossa. In return, the Pope presented the Doge Liani with a ring, with which he told him to wed the Adriatic, that posterity might know that the sea was subject to Venice, “as a bride is to her husband.”

In September 1796, nearly five years before this sonnet was written, the fate of the old Venetian Republic was sealed by the treaty of Campo Formio. The French army under Napoleon had subdued Italy, and, having crossed the Alps, threatened Vienna. To avert impending disaster, the Emperor Francis arranged a treaty which extinguished the Venetian Republic. He divided its territory between himself and Napoleon, Austria retaining Istria, Dalmatia, and the left bank of the Adige in the Venetian State, with the “maiden city” itself; France receiving the rest of the territory and the Ionian Islands. Since the date of that treaty the city has twice been annexed to Italy.—Ed.

THE KING OF SWEDEN.

Comp. August, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

THE Voice of song from distant lands shall call
To that great King; shall hail the crownèd Youth
Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,
By one example hath set forth to all
How they with dignity may stand; or fall,
If fall they must. Now, whither doth it tend?
And what to him and his shall be the end?
That thought is one which neither can appal
Nor cheer him; for the illustrious Swede hath done
The thing which ought to be; is raised *above*¹

¹ 1846.

. he stands above
All consequences

1807.

All consequences ; work he hath begun
 Of fortitude, and piety, and love,
 Which all his glorious ancestors approve :
 The heroes bless him, him their rightful son.

The king referred to is Gustavus IV., who was born in 1728, proclaimed king in 1792, and died in 1837. His first public act after his accession was to join in the coalition against Napoleon, and dislike of Napoleon was the spring of his policy. It is to this that Wordsworth refers in the sonnet—

. the illustrious Swede hath done
 The thing which ought to be.

It made him unpopular, however, and gave rise to a conspiracy against him, and to his consequent abdication in 1809. He “died forgotten and in poverty.”—ED.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

Comp. August, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den ;¹
 O miserable Chieftain ! where and when
 Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ; do thou
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind

* 1827.

Whether the rural milk-maid by her cow
 Sing in thy hearing, or thou liest now
 Alone in some deep dungeon's earless den.

1807.

Whether the all-cheering sun be free to shed
 His beams around thee, or thou rest thy head
 Pillowed in some dark dungeon's noisome den.

1815.

Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
 Within thy hearing, or thou liest now
 Buried in some deep dungeon's earless den.

1820

Powers that will work for thee ; air, earth, and skies ;
 There's not a breathing of the common wind
 That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

Francois Dominique Toussaint (who was surnamed L'Ouverture), the child of African slaves, was born at St Domingo in 1743. He was a Royalist in political sympathy till 1794, when the decree of the French convention, giving liberty to the slaves, brought him over to the side of the Republic. He was made a general of division by Laveux, and succeeded in taking the whole of the north of the island from the English. In 1796 he was made chief of the French army of St Domingo, and first the British commander, and next the Spanish, surrendered everything to him. He became governor of the island, which prospered under his rule. Napoleon, however, in 1801, issued an edict re-establishing slavery in St Domingo. Toussaint professed obedience, but showed that he meant to resist the edict. A fleet of fifty-four vessels was sent from France to enforce it. Toussaint was proclaimed an outlaw. He surrendered, and was received with military honours, but was treacherously arrested and sent to Paris in June 1802, where he died after ten months hardship in prison. He had been two months in prison when Wordsworth addressed this sonnet to him.—ED.

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE DAY OF
 LANDING.

Comp. Aug. 29, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe once more,¹
 The cock that crows, the smoke that curls, that sound
 Of bells ;—those boys who² in yon meadow-ground
 In white-sleeved shirts are playing ; and the roar³

¹ 1827.

Dear fellow traveller ! here we are once more, 1807.

² 1820.

. . . those boys that in . . . 1807.

³ 1816.

. . . are playing by the score, 1807.

Of the waves breaking on the chalky shore ;—¹
 All, all are English. Oft have I looked round
 With joy in Kent's green vales ; but never found
 Myself so satisfied in heart before.
 Europe is yet in bonds ; but let that pass,
 Thought for another moment. Thou art free,
 My Country ! and 'tis joy enough and pride
 For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the grass
 Of England once again, and hear and see,
 With such a dear Companion at my side.

"On 29th Aug. left Calais, at twelve in the morning for Dover. . . .
 Bathed, and sat on the Dover Cliffs, looked upon France. We could see
 the shores about as plain as if it were but an English lake. Mounted
 the coach at half-past four ; arrived in London at six."—(Dorothy
 Wordsworth's Journal.)

SEPTEMBER 1, 1802.

Comp. Sept. 1, 1802. — Pub 1807.

[Among the capricious acts of tyranny that disgraced those times, was
 the chasing of all negroes from France by decree of the government :
 we had a Fellow-passenger who was one of the expelled.]

WE had a female Passenger who came²
 From Calais with us, spotless in array,³
 A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,⁴

¹ 1815.

And even this little river's gentle roar, 1807

² 1845.

We had a fellow-passenger who came 1807.

Driven from the soil of France a female came 1827.

³ 1845.

. . . . gaudy in array, 1807.

. . . . brilliant in array, 1827.

⁴ 1845.

A negro woman like a lady gay, 1807.

Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame;¹
 Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim²
 She sate, from notice turning not away,
 But on all proffered intercourse did lay³
 A weight of languid speech, or to the same
 No sign of answer made by word or face:⁴
 Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,
 That, burning independent of the mind,
 Joined with the lustre of her rich attire
 To mock the Outcast—O ye Heavens, be kind!
 And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race!⁵

It was a natural arrangement which led Wordsworth to place this Sonnet immediately after the one addressed *To Toussaint L'Ouverture*.—
 Ed.

¹ 1827.

Yet silent as a woman fearing blame.

1807.

² 1827.

Dejected, meek, yea pitiably tame,

1807.

³ 1827.

But on our proffered kindness still did lay

1807.

⁴ 1845.

. or at the same
 Was silent, motionless in eyes and face.

1807.

⁵ 1845.

She was a Negro woman driven from France,
 Rejected like all others of her race,
 Not one of whom may now find footing there;
 This the poor Outcast did to us declare,
 Nor murmured at the unfeeling Ordinance.

1807.

Meanwhile these eyes retained their tropic fire,
 Which, burning independent of the mind,
 Joined with the lustre of her rich attire
 To mock the outcast—O ye Heavens be kind!
 And feel, thou earth, for this afflicted race!

1827.

Yet still these eyes retained

Which burning

1836.

SEPTEMBER, 1802, NEAR DOVER.

Comp. Sept. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

INLAND, within a hollow vale I stood ;
 And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
 The coast of France—the coast of France how near !
 Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.
 I shrunk ; for verily the barrier flood
 Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
 A span of waters ; yet what power is there !
 What mightiness for evil and for good !
 Even so doth God protect us if we be
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
 Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity ;
 Yet in themselves are nothing ! One decree
 Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
 Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

Coleridge, in *The Friend*, thus refers to the above sonnet :—" The narrow seas that form our boundaries, what were they in times of old ? The convenient highway for Danish and Norman pirates. What are they now ? Still, but a 'Span of Waters.' Yet they roll at the base of the Ararat, on which the Ark of the Hope of Europe and of Civilization rested !"

Even so doth God protect us, if we be
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow and waters roll,
 Strength to the brave, and power, and Deity :
 Yet in themselves are nothing ! One Decree
 Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the Soul
 Only, the Nations shall be great and free !"

The Friend, Vol. I., p. 106.

The note appended to the previous sonnet, "composed in the Valley near Dover, on the day of landing," shows that this one refers to the same occasion ; and that while "inland, within a hollow vale," he was at the same time on the Dover Cliffs—the "vale" being one of the hollow clefts in the headland, which front the Dover coast-line. The sonnet may have been composed, however, afterwards in London, and the date given to it by Wordsworth (September) be correct.—ED.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

Comp. Sept. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the Revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling I entered into the struggle carried on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped power of the French. Many times have I gone from Allan Bank in Grasmere Vale, where we were then residing, to the top of Raise-gap, as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morning, to meet the carrier bringing the newspapers from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of mind in which I then was may be found in my tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in these Sonnets.]

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
 To think that now our life is only drest
 For show ; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom !—We must run glittering like a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
 The wealthiest man among us is the best :
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry : and these we adore :
 Plain living and high thinking are no more :
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

Wordsworth stayed in London from August 30th to September 22nd 1802.—ED.

LONDON, 1802.

Comp. Sept. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

MILTON ! thou should'st be living at this hour :
 England hath need of thee : she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,

Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
 Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea :
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.¹

GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN AMONG US.

Comp. Sept. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

GREAT men have been among us ; hands that penned
 And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none :
 The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
 Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.
 These moralists could act and comprehend :
 They knew how genuine glory was put on ;
 Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
 In splendour : what strength was that would not bend
 But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
 Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !
 No single volume paramount, no code,
 No master spirit, no determined road ;
 But equally a want of books and men !

IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF THAT THE FLOOD.

Comp. Sept. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 • Of British freedom, which, to the open sea

¹ 1820.

. . . . on itself did lay.

1807.

Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,
 Roused though it be full often to a mood
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,¹
 That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible Knights of old:
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held.—In every thing we are sprung
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY WHAT HAS TAMED.

Comp. Sept. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
 Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
 The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
 I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,²
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
 And I by my affection was beguiled:
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

¹ 1827.

Road by which all might come and go that would,
 And bear out freights of worth to foreign lands. 1807.

² 1845.

But, when I think of thee, ... 1807.

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE
HAMBLETON HILLS, YORKSHIRE.

Comp. October 4, 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Composed October 4th, 1802, after a journey over the Hambleton Hills, on a day memorable to me—the day of my marriage. The horizon commanded by those hills is most magnificent. The next day, while we were travelling in a post-chaise up Wensleydale, we were stopped by one of the horses proving restive, and were obliged to wait two hours in a severe storm before the post-boy could fetch from the inn another to supply its place. The spot was in front of Bolton Hall, where Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner, soon after her unfortunate landing at Workington. The place then belonged to the Scroops, and memorials of her are yet preserved there. To beguile the time I composed a Sonnet. The subject was our own confinement contrasted with hers ; but it was not thought worthy of being preserved.]

DARK and more dark the shades of evening fell ;
The wished-for point was reached—but at an hour
When little could be gained from that rich dower
Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.¹
Yet did the glowing west with marvellous power
Salute us ; there stood Indian citadel,
Temple of Greece, and minster with its tower
Substantially expressed—a place for bell
Or clock to toll from !² Many a tempting isle

¹ 1836.

Ere we had reached the wished-for place night fell
We were too late at least by one dark hour,
And nothing could we see of all that power
Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell. 1807.

Dark, and more dark, the shades of Evening fell ;
The wished-for point was reached—but late the hour ;
And little could we see of all that power
Of prospect, ... 1815.

And little could be gained from all that dower
Of prospect, ... 1827.

² 1836.

The western sky did recompense us well
With Grecian Temple, Minaret, and Bower ;
And, in one part a Minster with its Tower
Substantially distinct 1807.

With groves that never were imagined, lay
 'Mid seas how steadfast! objects all for the eye
 Of silent rapture¹; but we felt the while
 We should forget them; they are of the sky,
 And from our earthly memory fade away.

Evidence, which it is unnecessary to state, led me (in preparing the Chronological Table in Vol. I.) to fix the 13th of July 1802 as the date of the composition of this Sonnet. The subjoined extract from Miss Wordsworth's journal shows that Wordsworth and she crossed over the Hambleton (or Hamilton) Hills that evening, on their way from Westmoreland to Gallow Hill, Yorkshire, to visit the Hutchinsons, before they went south to London and Calais, where they spent the month of August. But after his marriage to Mary Hutchinson, on the 4th of October, Wordsworth recrossed these Hambleton Hills on his way to Grasmere, which he reached on the evening of the 6th October; and the preceding Sonnet was composed on the evening of the 4th, as the Fenwick note indicates. The record in his sister's journal of their walk on the 13th July is as follows:—"Walked by Emont Bridge, thence by Greta Bridge. The sun shone cheerfully, and a glorious ride we had over the moors; every building bathed in golden light: we saw round us miles beyond miles, Darlington spire, &c. Thence to Thirsk; on foot to the Hamilton hills—Rivau. I went down to look at the ruins: thrushes singing, cattle feeding amongst the ruins of the Abbey; green hillocks about the ruins; these hillocks scattered over with *grovelets* of wild roses, and covered with wild flowers. I could have stayed in this solemn quiet spot till evening without a thought of moving, but W. was waiting for me."—ED.

Substantially expressed 1816.

Yet did the glowing west in all its power
 Salute us;—there stood Indian citadel
 Temple of Greece and minster with its tower
 Substantially expressed, ... 1827.

¹ 1827.

Many a glorious pile
 Did we behold, sights that might well repay
 All disappointment! and, as such, the eye
 Delighted in them; 1807.

fair sights that might repay 1815.

STANZAS,

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET COPY OF THOMSON'S CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Comp. 1802. — Pub. 1815.

[Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere, Coleridge living with us much at this time : his son Hartley has said, that his father's character and habits are here preserved in a livelier way than in anything that has been written about him.]

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt One
Whom without blame I may not overlook ;
For never sun on living creature shone
Who more devout enjoyment with us took :
Here on his hours he hung as on a book,
On his own time here would he float away,
As doth a fly upon a summer brook ;
But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,
Seek for him,—he is fled ; and whither none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home,
And find elsewhere his business or delight ;
Out of our Valley's limits did he roam :
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,
His voice came to us from the neighbouring height :
Oft could we see him ¹ driving full in view
At mid-day when the sun was shining bright ;
What ill was on him, what he had to do,
A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this Man
When he came back to us, a withered flower,—
Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.

Oft did we see him,

1815

Down would he sit ; and without strength or power
Look at the common grass from hour to hour ;
And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,
Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,
Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay ;
And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was
Whenever from our Valley he withdrew ;
For happier soul no living creature has
Than he had, being here the long day through.
Some thought he was a lover, and did woo :
Some thought far worse of him, and judged him wrong ;
But verse was what he had been wedded to ;
And his own mind did like a tempest strong
Come to him thus, and drove the weary Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly guise,
Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,
A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly
As if a blooming face it ought to be ;
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy ;
Profound his forehead was, though not severe ;
Yet some did think that he had little business here ;

Sweet heaven forefend ! his was a lawful right ;
Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy ;
His limbs would toss about him with delight
Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.
Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy
To banish listlessness and irksome care ;
He would have taught you how you might employ

Yourself; and many did to him repair,—
And certes not in vain; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried :
Long blades of grass, plucked round him as he lay,
Made, to his ear attentively applied,
A pipe on which the wind would deftly play ;
Glasses he had, that little things display,
The beetle panoplied in gems and gold,
A mailed angel on a battle-day ;
The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,
And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear
His music, and to view his imagery :
And, sooth, these two were each to the other dear : ¹
No livelier love in such a place could be : ²
There did they dwell—from earthly labour free,
As happy spirits as were ever seen ;
If but a bird, to keep them company,
Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,
As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-queen.

These stanzas require some explanation. The Fenwick note makes it clear that Coleridge is one of the two characters described ; but which of the two it is difficult to say. The description, in the fifth stanza, of the

Noticeable man with large grey eyes,

has usually been understood to refer to Coleridge. They are prefixed to Chapter IV. of the Biographical Supplement to the *Biographia Literaria* as if referring to him. If they do describe Coleridge, then the first four

¹ 1836.

. . . these two did love each other dear. 1815.

² 1836.

As far as love in such a place could be. 1815.

stanzas of the poem refer to Wordsworth. But there is certainly some incongruity in his thus beginning a poem referring to himself—

Within our happy Castle there dwell One
Whom without blame I may not overlook.

Still more incongruous are the following lines, if applied by Wordsworth to himself—

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this Man, *
When he came back to us, a withered flower,—
Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.

And knowing the restless wandering life which Coleridge led, during the early years of the Wordsworth's settlement at Grasmere, the suddenness with which he would appear at Dove Cottage (crossing over without warning from Keswick), and the suddenness with which he would depart, much of the description of these first four stanzas—and notably the three last lines of the fourth stanza—seem specially relevant to him. Then, the description in the fifth stanza—

Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy,

is quite applicable to Wordsworth. The “expedients, too, of simple sort,”

To banish listlessness and irksome care,
the pipes made of blades of grass, and the magnifying glasses through which he looked at the glories of the beetle,

A mailèd angel on a battle-day,
all seem relevant enough to Wordsworth himself.

But, on the other hand,—and as confirming the ordinary opinion that Wordsworth is alluding to himself in the earlier, and to Coleridge in the later stanzas of the poem,—one may compare the lines—

Down would he sit ; and without strength or power
Look at the common grass from hour to hour,

with the first verse of *Expostulation and Reply*, written at Affoxden—

Why William, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away !

And the description of his lying in the “sunshiny shade” of the orchard at Town-end Cottage, and “sleeping himself away”—

Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,
of his voice coming from the mountains on stormy nights, and his wandering beyond the limits of the valley, his restless restfulness, his

moodiness, the irregularity of his movements, his enjoyment in Nature, and his devotion to Verse all apply significantly enough to Wordsworth ; while, if Coleridge be the "noticeable man with large grey eyes," there is much in the second part of the poem very apposite to him.

Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy.

Mr Hutchinson tells me he has "often heard his father say that Coleridge was uproarious in his mirth."

On the whole, I think it most probable that the first four stanzas refer to Wordsworth, and that the fifth, sixth, and seventh describe Coleridge. The Bishop of Lincoln takes this for granted (see *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 99) : and Miss Wordsworth, writing of Coleridge in 1797, said, "His eye is large . . . and grey. . . . He has a profound forehead."—ED.

TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD.

Comp. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

O THOU ! whose fancies from afar are brought :
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
 And fittest to unutterable thought
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;
 Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
 In such clear water, that thy boat
 May rather seem
 To brood on air that on an earthly stream ;
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
 Where earth and heaven do make one imagery ;
 O blessed vision ! happy child !
 Thou art so exquisitely wild,
 I think of thee with many fears
 For what may be thy lot in future years.
 I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
 Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
 And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
 But when she sate within the touch of thee.
 O too industrious folly !
 O vain and causeless melancholy !

Nature will either end thee quite ;
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,
 A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,
 Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,¹
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;
 A gem that glitters while it lives,
 And no forewarning gives ;
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
 Slips in a moment out of life.

These stanzas were addressed to Hartley Coleridge. The lines

I think of thee with many fears
 For what may be thy lot in future years,

taken in connection with his subsequent career suggests the similarly
 sad "presentiment" with which the lines on Tintern Abbey conclude.
 —Ed.

TO THE DAISY.

Comp. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

"HER * divine skill taught me this,
 That from every thing I saw
 I could some instruction draw,
 And raise pleasure to the height
 Through the meanest object's sight.
 By the murmur of a spring,
 Or the least bough's rustelling ;

1827.

Not doomed to jostle with unkindly shocks. 1807.

Not framed to undergo unkindly shocks. 1815.

* His muse. 1815.

By a Daisy whose leaves spread
Shut when Titan goes to bed ;
Or a shady bush or tree ;
She could more infuse in me
Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man."

G. WITHER.¹

[Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.]

IN youth from rock to rock I went,
From hill to hill in discontent
Of pleasure high and turbulent,
Most pleased when most uneasy ;
But now my own delights I make,—
My thirst at every rill can slake,
And gladly Nature's love partake,
Of Thee, sweet Daisy !²

Thee Winter in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few grey hairs ;
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee ;³

¹ Added in ed. 1815.

1807.

And Nature's love of thee partake,
Her much-loved Daisy !

1836.

Return to reading of 1807 in
Of her sweet Daisy.

1843.

C.

³ 1836.

When soothed awhile by milder airs,
Thee Winter in the garland wears,
That thinly shades his few grey hairs ;
Spring cannot shun thee ;

1807.

When Winter decks his few gray hairs,
Thee in the scanty wreath he wears ;
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee ;

1827.

Whole Summer-fields are thine by right ;
 And^{*} Autumn, melancholy Wight !
 Doth in thy crimson head delight
 When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
 Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane ;
 Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
 Yet nothing daunted,
 Nor grieved if thou be set at nought : ¹
 And oft alone in nooks remote
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret news
 The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose ;
 Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling,
 Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame ;
 Thou art indeed by many a claim
 The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
 Or, some bright day of April sky,
 Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
 Near the green holly,
 And wearily at length should fare ;
 He needs but look about, and there
 Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
 His melancholy.

¹ 1836.

If welcome once thou count'st it gain ; .
 Thou art not daunted,
 Nor car'st if thou be set at naught ;

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
 Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension ;
 Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
 Some memory that had taken flight ;
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;¹
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,
 I drink out of an humbler urn
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life, our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
 When thou art up, alert and gay,²
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play
 With kindred gladness :³
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.⁴

¹ 1807. Some charm of fancy c.

² 1836. When, smitten by the morning ray,
 I see thee rise alert and gay, 1807.

³ 1815. With kindred motion. 1807.

⁴ 1815. At dusk, I've seldom marked thee press
 The ground, as if in thankfulness,
 Without some feeling, more or less,
 Of true devotion. 1807.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt,
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
 A happy, genial influence,
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run
 Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun
 As ready to salute the sun
 As lark or leveret,
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ; *
 Nor be less dear to future men
 Than in old time ;—thou not in vain
 Art Nature's favourite.¹

For illustration of the last stanza, see Chaucer's Prologue to "The Legend of Good Women."

As I seyde erst, whanne comen is the May,
 That in my bed ther daweth me no day,
 That I nam uppe and walkyng in the mede,
 To seen this floure agein the sonne sprede,

¹ 1836.

Child of the year ! that round dost run
 Thy course, bold lover of the sun,
 And cheerful when the day's begun
 As morning leveret,
 Thou long the Poet's praise shalt gain ;
 Thou wilt be more beloved by men
 In times to come ; thou not in vain
 Art Nature's favourite.

1807.

Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
 Dear shall thou be to future men
 As in old time ;—

1815.

* See, in Chaucer, and the elder poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower. 1815.

TO THE SAME FLOWER.

315

Whan it up rysith erly by the morwe ;
That blisful sight softneth al my sorwe,
So glād am I, whan that I have presence
Of it, to doon it alle reverence,
As she that is of alle floures flour.

To seen this flour so yong, so fresshe of hewe,
Constreynde me with so gledy desire,
That in myn herte I feele yet the fire,
That made me to ryse er yt wer day,
And this was now the firste morwe of May,
With dredful hert, and glad devocioun
For to ben at the resurreccion
Of this flour, whan that yt shulde unclose
Agayne the sonne, that roos as rede as rose
And doune on knes anoon ryght I me sette,
And as I koude, this fresshe flour I grette,
Knelying alwey, til it unclosed was,
Upon the smale, softe, swote gras.

Again, in *the Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, after a wakeful night, the Poet rises at dawn, and wandering forth, reaches a "laund of white and green."

So feire oon had I nevere in bene,
The grounde was grene, y poudred with daysé,
The flowres and the gras ilike al hie,
Al grene and white, was nothing elles sene."

—ED.

TO THE SAME FLOWER.*

Comp. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.]

WITH little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy ! again I talk to thee,¹
For thou art worthy,

¹ 1849.

Sweet Daisy oft I talk to thee,
Yet once again I talk to thee,

1807.

1848.

* The two following Poems were overflowings of the mind in composing the one which stands first in the first volume (i.e. the previous Poem). 1807.

Thou unassuming Common-place
 Of Nature, with that homely face,
 And yet with something of a grace,
 Which Love makes for thee !

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
 I sit, and play with similes.¹
 Loose types of things through all degrees,
 Thoughts of thy raising :
 And many a fond and idle name
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,
 As is the humour of the game,
 While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port ;
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
 In thy simplicity the sport
 Of all temptations ;
 A queen in crown of rubies drest ;
 A starveling in a scanty vest ;
 Are all as seems to suit thee best,
 Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye
 Staring to threaten and defy,
 That thought comes next—and instantly
 The freak is over,
 The ~~shape~~ will vanish—and behold
 A silver ~~shield~~ with boss of gold,
 That ~~spreads~~ itself some faery bold
 In fight to cover !

I see thee glittering from afar—
 And then thou art a pretty star ;

1820.

Oft do I sit by thee at ease,
 And weave a web of similes,

1807.

Not quite so fair as many are
 In heaven above thee !
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—
 May peace come never to his nest
 Who shall reprove thee !

Bright *Flower* ! for by that name at last,
 When all my reveries are past,
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
 Sweet silent creature !
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
 My heart with gladness, and a share
 Of thy meek nature !

In 1843 Wordsworth gave 1805 as the year in which this poem was composed, but the Fenwick note prefixed to it renders this impossible. It evidently belongs to the same time, and "mood," as the previous poem.—Ed.

TO THE DAISY.

(Comp. 1802. — Pub. 1807.

[This and the other Poems addressed to the same flower were composed at Town-end, Grasmere, during the earlier part of my residence there. I have been censured for the last line but one—"thy function apostolical"—as being little less than profane. How could it be thought so ! The word is adopted with reference to its derivation, implying something sent on a mission ; and assuredly this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in its humble degree, as administering both to moral and to spiritual purposes.]

BRIGHT Flower ! whose home is everywhere,
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,¹

¹ 1843.

A Pilgrim bold in Nature's care,	1807.
Confiding Flower, by Nature's care,	
Made bold,—who, lodging here or there,	
Art all the long year through the heir	
Of joy or sorrow,	1836.

And all the long year through the heir
 Of joy or sorrow ;
 Methinks that there abides in thee
 Some concord with humanity,¹
 Given to no other flower I see
 The forest thorough !

Is it that Man is soon deprest ?
 A thoughtless Thing ! who, once unblest,
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason,
 And Thou would'st teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind
 And every season ?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
 Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing ;
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.

These three Poems on *The Daisy* evidently belong to the same time, and are, as Wordsworth expressly says, "overflowings of the same mood." Nevertheless, in the revised edition of 1836, he gave the date 1802 to the first and the third, and 1805 to the second of them. In the earlier editions 1815 to 1832, they are all classed amongst the "Poems of the Fancy," but in ed. 1836, the last, "Bright Flower ! whose home is everywhere," is ranked amongst the "Poems of Sentiment and Reflection." They should manifestly be arranged together. The fourth poem *To the Daisy*—consisting of elegiac stanzas on his brother John, belonging to a subsequent year, and having no connection with the three preceding poems—will be found in its chronological place.—ED.

¹ 1807.

Communion with humanity,
 Some concord, &c.,

1836.

readopted in 1843.

1803.

The poems associated with the year 1803 consist mainly of the "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland," which Wordsworth and his sister took—along with Coleridge—in the autumn of that year, although many of these were not written till some time after the Tour was finished. *The Green Linnet* and *Yew-trees* were written in 1803, and some sonnets were composed in the month of October; but, on the whole, 1803 was not a fruitful year, in Wordsworth's life, as regards his lyrics and smaller poems. Doubtless both *The Prelude* and *The Excursion* were being revised and added to in 1803.—ED.

THE GREEN LINNET.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

[Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere, where the bird was often seen as here described.]

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
 With brightest sunshine round me spread
 Of spring's unclouded weather,
 In this sequestered nook how sweet
 To sit upon my orchard-seat!
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,
 My last year's friends together.¹

¹ 1827.

The May is come again,—how sweet
 To sit upon my orchard-seat!
 And Birds and Flowers once more to greet,
 My last year's Friends together;
 My thoughts they all by turns employ;
 A whispering Leaf is now my joy,
 And then a Bird will be the toy
 That doth my fancy tether.

1807.

And Flowers and Birds once more to greet,

1815.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest :

Hail to Thee, far above the rest

In joy of voice and pinion !

Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array,

Presiding Spirit here to-day,

Dost lead the revels of the May ;

And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,

Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,

Art sole in thy employment :

A Life, a Presence like the Air,

Scattering thy gladness without care

Too blest with any one to pair ;

Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,

That twinkle to the gusty breeze,

Behold him perched in ecstacies,

Yet seeming still to hover ;

There ! where the flutter of his wings

Upon his back and body flings

Shadows and sunny glimmerings,

That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,

A Brother of the dancing leaves ;

Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves

Pours forth his song in gushes ;

As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
While fluttering in the bushes.¹

This, of all Wordsworth's Poems, is the one most distinctively associated with the Orchard, at Town-end, Grasmere.—ED.

YEW-TREES.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1815.*

[Written at Grasmere. These Yew-trees are still standing, but the spread of that at Lorton is much diminished by mutilation. I will here mention that a little way up the hill, on the road leading from Rosthwaite to Stonethwaite (in Borrowdale) lay the trunk of a Yew-tree, which appeared as you approached, so vast was its diameter, like the entrance of a cave, and not a small one. Calculating upon what I have observed of the slow growth of this tree in rocky situations, and of its durability, I have often thought that the one I am describing must have been as old as the Christian era. The Tree lay in the line of a fence. Great masses of its ruins were strewn about, and some had been

¹ 1832.

While thus before my eyes he gleams,
A Brother of the Leaves he seems ;
When in a moment forth he teems
His little song in gushes ;
As if it pleased him to disdain
And mock the Form which he did feign,
While he was dancing with the train
Of Leaves among the bushes.

1807.

The voiceless Form he chose to feign,

1820.

My sight he dazzles, half deceives,
A bird so like the dancing leaves.
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
Pours forth his song in gushes.
As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
When fluttering in the bushes.

1827.

rolled down the hillside and lay near the road at the bottom. As you approached the tree, you were struck with the number of shrubs and young plants, ashes, &c., which had found a bed upon the decayed trunk and grew to no inconsiderable height, forming, as it were, a part of the hedgerow. In no part of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnitude, as it must have stood. By the bye, Hutton, the old guide, of Keswick, had been so impressed with the remains of this tree, that he used gravely to tell strangers that there could be no doubt of its having been in existence before the flood.]

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore ;
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched
To Scotland's heaths ; or those that crossed the sea
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.
Of vast circumference and gloom profound
This solitary Tree ! a living thing
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove ;
Huge trunks ! and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved ;
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane ;—a pillared shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purposes, decked
With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes
May meet at noontide ; Fear and trembling Hope,

Silence and Foresight ; Death the Skeleton
 And Time the Shadow ;—there to celebrate,
 As in a natural temple scattered o'er
 With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
 United worship ; or in mute repose
 To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
 Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

The text of this poem was never altered.

The Yew-tree—which, in 1803, was “of vast circumference,” the
 “pride of Lorton Vale,” and is described as—

a living thing
 Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
 Of form and aspect too magnificent
 To be destroyed—

does not now verify this sanguine prediction of its future. Mr Wilson Robinson of Whinfell Hall, Cockermouth, wrote to me of it in May 1880 :—“The tree in outline expanded towards the root considerably : then, at about two feet from the ground, the trunk began to separate into huge limbs, spreading in all directions. I once measured this trunk at its least circumference, and found it 23 feet 10 inches. For the last 50 or 60 years the branches have been gradually dying on the S.E. side, and about 25 years ago a strong S.E. gale, coming with accumulated force down Hope Gill, and—owing to the tree being so open on that side—taking it laterally at a disadvantage, wrenched off one of the great side branches down to the ground, carrying away nearly a third of the tree. This event led to farther peril ; for, the second portion having been sold to a cabinetmaker at Whitehaven for £15, this gave the impression that the wood was very valuable (owing to the celebrity of the tree) ; and a local woodmonger bought the remainder. Two men worked half a day to grub it up ; but a Cockermouth medical gentleman, hearing what was going on, made representations to the owner, and it ended in the woodmen sparing the remainder of the tree, which was not much the worse for what had been done. Many large dead branches have also been cut off, and now we have to regret that the ‘pride of Lorton Vale,’ shorn of its ancient dignity, is but a ruin, much more venerable than picturesque.”

The “fraternal Four of Borrowdale” are certainly “worthier still of note.” The “trunk” described in the Fenwick note, as on the road between Rosthwaite and Stonethwaite, has disappeared long ago ; but the “solemn and capacious grove” still exists in its integrity. The description in the poem is realistic throughout, while the visible scene suggests “an ideal grove, in which the ghostly masters of mankind

meet, and sleep, and offer worship to the Destiny that abides above them, while the mountain flood, as if from another world, makes music to which they daily listen." (Mr Stopford Brooke.) With the first part of the poem *Yew-trees* may be compared the *Sonnet composed at Neidpath Castle* on the Tweed in the Scotch Tour, 1803. For a critical estimate of this poem see *Modern Painters*, part III., sec. II., chap. IV. Mr Ruskin alludes to "the real and high action of the imagination in Wordsworth's *Yew-trees* (perhaps the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted). It is too long to quote, but the reader should refer to it: let him note especially, if painter, that pure touch of colour, 'by sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged,' *Modern Painters*, Vol. II., p. 193. See also Coleridge's Criticism in the *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. II., p. 177, and his daughter (Sara Coleridge's) comment on her father's note.—ED.

WHO FANCIED WHAT A PRETTY SIGHT.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

Who fancied what a pretty sight
This rock would be if edged around
With living snow-drops? circlet bright!
How glorious to this orchard-ground!
Who loved the little Rock, and set
Upon its head this coronet?

Was it the humour of a child?
Or rather of some gentle maid,¹
Whose brows, the day that she was styled
The shepherd-queen, were thus arrayed?
Of man mature, or matron sage?
Or old man toying with his age?

I asked—'twas whispered; The device
To each and all might well belong:

¹ 1836.

Or rather of some love sick maid.

1807.

It is the Spirit of Paradise
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,
That gives to all the self-same bent
Where life is wise and innocent.

IT IS NO SPIRIT WHO FROM HEAVEN HATH
FLOWN.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I remember the instant my sister S. H., called me to the window of our Cottage, saying, "Look how beautiful is yon star! It has the sky all to itself." I composed the verses immediately.]

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath flown,
And is descending on his embassy;
Nor Traveller gone from earth the heavens to espy!
'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with glittering crown,
First admonition that the sun is down!
For yet it is broad day-light; clouds pass by;
A few are near him still—and now the sky.
He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.
O most ambitious Star! an inquest wrought
Within me when I recognised thy light;
A moment I was startled at the sight:
And, while I gazed, there came to me a thought
That I might step beyond my natural race
As thou seem'st now to do; might one day trace
Some ground not mine; and, strong her strength above,
My Soul, an Apparition in the place,
Tread there with steps that no one shall reprove!

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

1803.

These Poems were first collected, under the above title, in the edition of 1827. In 1807, nine of them were printed under the title, "Poems, written during a Tour in Scotland," and this group begins the second volume of the small edition of that year. But in 1815 and 1820, they were distributed again through the several artificial classes: *The Blind Highland Boy* going into the "Poems belonging to the Period of Childhood;" *Ellen Irwin* into the "Poems founded on the Affections;" *Stepping Westward*, *Glen Almain*, *To a Highland Girl*, and *The Solitary Reaper*—being ranked amongst the "Poems of the Imagination;" *Rob Roy's Grave*, and *To the Sons of Burns*, being placed amongst the "Poems proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection;" the Sonnet to Neidpath Castle, and *On Approaching Home* being included in the "Miscellaneous Sonnets;" and *The Matron of Jedburgh* amongst the "Poems referring to the Period of Old Age." Although some were composed after the Tour was finished—and the order in which Wordsworth placed them is not the order of the Scotch Tour itself—it may be best to keep to his method of arrangement in this particular group, just as we retain it in such a series as the Duddon Sonnets.—ED.

DEPARTURE

FROM THE VALE OF GRASMERE. AUGUST, 1803.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1827.

[Mr Coleridge, my sister, and myself started together from Town-end to make a tour in Scotland. Poor Coleridge was at that time in bad spirits, and somewhat too much in love with his own dejection; and he departed from us, as is recorded in my Sister's Journal, soon after we left Loch Lomond. The verses that stand foremost among these Memorials were not actually written for the occasion, but transplanted from my "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont."]

THE gentlest Shade that walked Elysian plains
Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains;
Even for the tenants of the zone that lies
Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,

Methinks 'twould heighten joy to overleap
 At will the crystal battlements, and peep
 Into some other region, though less fair,
 To see how things are made and managed there.
 Change for the worse might please, incursion bold
 Into the tracts of darkness and of cold ;
 O'er Limbo lake with æry flight to steer,
 And on the verge of Chaos hang in fear.
 Such animation often do I find,
 Power in my breast, wings growing in my mind,
 Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,
 Perchance without one look behind me cast,
 Some barrier with which Nature, from the birth
 Of things, has fenced this fairest spot on earth.
 O pleasant transit, Grasmere ! to resign
 Such happy fields, abodes so calm as thine ;
 Not like an outcast with himself at strife ;
 The slave of business, time, or care for life,
 But moved by choice ; or, if constrained in part,
 Yet still with Nature's freedom at the heart ;—
 To cull contentment upon wildest shores,
 And luxuries extract from bleakest moors ;
 With prompt embrace all beauty to enfold,
 And having rights in all that we behold.
 —Then why these lingering steps ?—A bright adieu,
 For a brief absence, proves that love is true ;
 Ne'er can the way be irksome or forlorn
 That winds into itself for sweet return.

The following is from Dorothy Wordsworth's *Recollections of a Tour in Scotland* :—" William and I parted from Mary on Sunday afternoon, August 14th, 1803 ; and William, Coleridge, and I left Keswick on Monday morning, the 15th."—ED.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1845.

[For illustration, see my *Sister's Journal*. It may be proper to add that the second of these pieces, though *felt* at the time, was not composed till many years after.]

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold :
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear ?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain ;
And both my wishes and my fear,
Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight !—away
Dark thoughts !—they came, but not to stay :
With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius “ glinted ” forth,
Rose like a star that touching earth,
For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they now?—
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
 And showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne
 On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends,—
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
 By Skiddaw seen,—
Neighbours we were, and loving friends
 We might have been :

True friends though diversely inclined ;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined,
 Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
Thou " poor Inhabitant below,"
At this dread moment—even so—
 Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast !

But why go on ?—

Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not [°]three weeks past the Stripling died,)
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
Soul-moving sight !
Yet one to which is not denied
Some sad delight :

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harboured where none can be misled,
Wronged, or distrest ;
And surely here it may be said
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked oft-times in a devious race,
May He who halloweth the place
Where Man is laid
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,
Music that sorrow comes not near,
A ritual hymn. •
Chaunted in love that casts out fear
By Seraphim.

The following is from Miss Wordsworth's Journal of the Tour in Scotland :—"Thursday, August 18th.—Went to the churchyard where Burns is buried. A Bookseller accompanied us. He showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a bye situation, whitewashed. Went on to visit his grave. He lies at a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Francis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected, to be expended on some sort of monument. 'There,' said the Bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'there lies Mr Such-a-one.' I have forgotten his name. A remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and hardly ever lost a cause he undertook. Burns made many a lanpoon upon him, and there they rest, as you see.' We looked at the grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses.

Is there a man whose judgment clear,
Can others teach the way to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career.
Wild as the wave!
Here let him pause, and through a tear
Survey this grave.

The poor Inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low
And stained his name.

"I cannot take leave of the country which we passed through to-day without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland Mountains, within half-a-mile of Ellisland, Burns' house, the last view we had of them. Drayton has prettily described the connection which this neighbourhood has with ours when he makes Skiddaw say—

Scurfell* from the sky,
That Anadale† doth crown, with a most amorous eye,
Salutes me every day, or at my pride looks grim,
Oft threatening me with clouds, as I oft threatening him!

"These lines recurred to William's memory, and we talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions, including ourselves in the fancy, that we might have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes."—ED.

* Criffel.

† Annandale.

T H O U G H T S

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF NITH,
NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1845.

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
That must have followed when his brow
Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us how—
 With holly spray,
He faltered, drifted to and fro,
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng
Our minds when, lingering all too long,
Over the grave of Burns we hung
 In social grief—
Indulged as if it were a wrong
 To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,
And prompt to welcome every gleam
 Of good and fair,
Let us beside this limpid Stream
 Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight ;
Think rather of those moments bright
When to the consciousness of right
 His course was true,
When Wisdom prospered in his sight
 And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
Freely as in youth's season bland,

When side by side, his Book in hand,
 We wont to stray,
Our pleasure varying at command
 Of each sweet Lay.

How oft inspired must he have trod
These pathways, yon far-stretching road !
There lurks his home ; in that Abode,
 With mirth elate,
Or in his nobly-pensive mood,
 The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,
Before it humbly let us pause,
And ask of Nature, from what cause
 And by what rules
She trained her Burns to win applause
 That shames the Schools.

Through busiest streets and loneliest glen
Are felt the flashes of his pen :
He rules mid winter snows, and when
 Bees fill their hives ;
Deep in the general heart of men
 His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,
And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
 From genuine springs,
Shall dwell together till old Time
 Folds up his Wings ?

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of Heaven
This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;

The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavour,
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven
 Effaced for ever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
 On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live?—
 The best of what we do and are,
 Just God, forgive!

See note to previous poem.

“These pathways, yon far-stretching road!”

refers probably to the road to Brownhill, past Ellisland farmhouse where Burns lived. “The day following” would be Aug. 19th, 1802. The extract which follows from the *Journal* is a further illustration of the poem. “Travelled through the vale of Nith, here little like a vale, it is so broad, with irregular hills rising up on each side, in outline resembling the old-fashioned valances of a bed. There is a great deal of arable land; the corn ripe; trees here and there—plantations, clumps, coppices, a newness in everything. So much of the gorse and broom rooted out that you wonder why it is not all gone, and yet there seems to be almost as much gorse and broom as corn; and they grow one among another you know not how. Crossed the Nith; the vale becomes narrow, and very pleasant; cornfields, green hills, clay cottages; the river's bed rocky, with woody banks. Left the Nith about a mile and a half, and reached Brownhill, a lonely inn, where we slept. The view from the windows was pleasing, though some travellers might have been disposed to quarrel with it for its general nakedness; yet there was abundance of corn. It is an open country—open, yet all over hills. At a little distance were many cottages among trees, that looked very pretty. Brownhill is about seven or eight miles from Ellisland. I fancied to myself, while I was sitting in the parlour, that Burns might have caroused there, for most likely his rounds extended so far, and this thought gave a melancholy interest to the smoky walls.”

On Dec. 23, 1839, Wordsworth wrote thus, from Rydal Mount, to Mr Henry Reed, Philadelphia:—“The other day I chanced to be looking over a MS. poem belonging to the year 1803, though not actually composed till many years afterwards. It was suggested by visiting the

neighbourhood of Dumfries, in which Burns had resided, and where he died : it concluded thus :

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of heaven, &c.

I instantly added, the other day,

But why to him confine the prayer, &c.

The more I reflect upon this, the more I feel justified in attaching comparatively small importance to any literary monument that I may be enabled to leave behind. It is well however, I am convinced, that men think otherwise in the earlier part of their lives. . . .”—ED.

TO THE SONS OF BURNS,

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR FATHER.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

“The Poet's grave is in a corner of the churchyard. We looked at it with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses—

“ ‘Is there a man whose judgment clear,’ &c.”

—*Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-traveller.*

'MID crowded obelisks and urns
I sought the untimely grave of Burns ;
Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
With sorrow true ;
And more would grieve, but that it turns
Trembling to you !¹

Through twilight shades of good and ill
Ye now are panting up life's hill,²
And more than common strength and skill
Must ye display ;
If ye would give the better will
Its lawful sway.

¹ This stanza was added in ed. 1827.

1827.

Ye now are panting up life's hill !
'Tis twilight-time of good and ill,

1807.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear¹
 Intemperance with less harm, beware !
 But if the Poet's wit ye share,
 Like him can speed
 The social hour—of tenfold care²
 There will be need ;

For honest men delight will take³
 To spare your failings for his sake,⁴
 Will flatter you,—and fool and rake
 Your steps pursue ;
 And of your Father's name will make
 A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,
 And add your voices to the quire
 That sanctify the cottage fire
 With service meet ;
 There seek the genius of your Sire,
 His spirit greet ;

¹ 1827.

Strong bodied if ye be to bear

1807.

² 1807.

. for tenfold care

1836.

³ 1807.

Even honest men

1836.

⁴ 1843.

For honest men delight will take

To show you favour for his sake,

1807.

For their beloved Poet's sake,

Even honest men delight will take,

1820.

Even honest men

1827.

Or where, 'mid "lonely heights and hows,"
 He paid to nature tuneful vows ;
 Or wiped his honourable brows
 Bedewed with toil,
 While reapers strove, or busy ploughs
 Upturned the soil ;

His judgment with benignant ray
 Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way ;
 But ne'er to a seductive lay
 Let faith be given ;
 Nor deem that "light which leads astray,
 Is light from Heaven."¹

Let no mean hope your souls enslave ;
 Be independent, generous, brave ;
 Your Father such example gave,
 And such revere ;
 But be admonished by his grave,
 And think, and fear !

"The grave of Burns' Son, which we had just seen by the side of his Father, and some stories heard at Dumfries respecting the dangers his surviving children were exposed to, filled us with melancholy concern, which had a kind of connection with ourselves. In recollection of this, William long afterwards wrote the Address to the Sons of the ill-fated poet."—Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, August 18, 1803.

"The body of Burns was not allowed to remain long in this place. To suit the plan of a rather showy mausoleum his remains were removed into a more commodious spot of the same kirkyard on the 5th July 1815."—(Allan Cunningham.)

In the edition of 1807, the date appended is "August 14, 1803," and hence the insertion of that date in the chronological table of the poems (Vol. I. of this edition, p. lv.) ; but it is evident from the Journal of the Scotch Tour that this is erroneous, and that the exact date was August 18th, 1803.—Ed.

¹ This and the two previous verses were first published in ed. 1827.

Ellen Irwin ; or, *The Braes of Kirtle*, comes next in this series of “*Memorials of a Tour in Scotland* ;” but it has already been printed in its proper chronological place, amongst the poems belonging to the year 1800.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

(AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND)

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1815.

[This delightful creature and her demeanour are particularly described in my *Sister's Journal*. The sort of prophecy with which the verses conclude has, through God's goodness, been realized ; and now, approaching the close of my 73d year, I have a most vivid remembrance of her and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded. She is alluded to in the poem of “*The Three Cottage Girls*,” among my *Continental Memorials*. In illustration of this class of poems I have scarcely anything to say beyond what is anticipated in my *Sister's faithful and admirable Journal*.]

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these grey rocks ; that household lawn ;¹
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake ,
This little bay ; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode—
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream ;
Such Forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep !
But, O fair Creature ! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,²

¹ 1836.

. . . this household Lawn,

1807.

² The two preceding lines added in 1845.

I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,¹
 I bless thee with a human heart ;
 God shield thee to thy latest years !
 Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers ;²
 And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
 For thee when I am far away :
 For never saw I mien, or face,
 In which more plainly I could trace
 Benignity and home-bred sense
 Ripening in perfect innocence.
 Here scattered, like a random seed,
 Remote from men, Thou dost not need
 The embarrassed look of shy distress,
 And maidenly shamefacedness :
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a Mountaineer :
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
 And seemliness complete, that sways
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
 With no restraint, but such as springs
 From quick and eager visitings
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
 Of thy few words of English speech :
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !

¹ 1845.

Yet dream and vision as thou art,

1807.

Yet dream or vision as thou art,

1836.

² 1845.

I neither know thee nor thy peers ;

1807.

So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful?
O happy pleasure! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell;
Adopt your homely ways and dress,
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdless!
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality:
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see!
Thy elder Brother I would be,
Thy Father—anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven: that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had; and going hence
I bear away my recompence.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:
Then, why should I be loth to stir?
I feel this place was made for her:
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part:

For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

Extract from Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal of a Tour in Scotland* : —“ After long waiting, the girls, who had been on the look-out, informed us that the boat was coming. I went to the waterside, and saw a cluster of people on the opposite shore ; but, being yet at a distance, they looked more like soldiers surrounding a carriage than a group of men and women ; red and green were the distinguishable colours. We hastened to get ourselves ready as soon as we saw the party approach, but had longer to wait than we expected, the lake being wider than it appears to be. As they drew near we could distinguish men in tartan plaids, women in scarlet cloaks, and green umbrellas by the half-dozen. The landing was as pretty a sight as ever I saw. The bay, which had been so quiet two days before, was all in motion with small waves, while the swollen waterfall roared in our ears. The boat came steadily up, being pressed almost to the water's edge by the weight of its cargo ; perhaps twenty people landed, one after another. It did not rain much, but the women held up their umbrellas ; they were dressed in all the colours of the rainbow, and with their scarlet cardinals, the tartan plaids of the men, and Scotch bonnets, made a gay appearance. There was a joyous bustle surrounding the boat, which even imparted something of the same character to the waterfall in its tumult, and the restless grey waves ; the young men laughed and shouted, the lasses laughed, and the elder folks seemed to be in a bustle to be away. I remember well with what haste the mistress of the house where we were ran up to seek after her child, and seeing us, how anxiously and kindly she inquired how we had fared, if we had had a good fire, had been well waited upon, &c., &c. All this in three minutes—for the boatman had another party to bring from the other side, and hurried us off.

“The hospitality we had met with at the two cottages and Mr Macfarlane's gave us very favourable impressions on this our first entrance into the Highlands, and at this day the innocent merriment of the girls, with their kindness to us, and the beautiful face and figure of the elder, come to my mind whenever I think of the ferry-house and waterfall of Loch Lomond, and I never think of the two girls but the whole image of that romantic spot is before me, a living image as it will be to my dying day.

•“The following poem was written by William not long after our return from Scotland.”—Sunday, Aug. 28, 1803.—ED.

GLEN-ALMAIN ;

OR, THE NARROW GLEN..

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

IN this still place, remote from men,
 Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN ;
 In this still place, where murmurs on
 But one meek streamlet, only one :
 He sang of battles, and the breath
 Of stormy war, and violent death ;
 And should, methinks, when all was past,
 Have rightfully been laid at last
 Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent
 As by a spirit turbulent ;
 Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild
 And everything unreconciled ;
 In some complaining, dim retreat,
 For fear and melancholy meet ;
 But this is calm ; there cannot be
 A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed ?
 Or is it but a groundless creed ?
 What matters it ?—I blame them not
 Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot
 Was moved ; and in such way expressed
 Their notion of its perfect rest.
 A convent, even a hermit's cell,
 Would break the silence of this Dell :
 It is not quiet, is not ease ;
 But something deeper far than these :
 The separation that is here
 - Is of the grave ; and of austere

Yet happy feelings of the dead :¹
 And, therefore, was it rightly said
 That Ossian, last of all his race !
 Lies buried in this lonely place.

* This glen is Glen Almond, in Perthshire, between Crieff and Amulree. It is known locally as "the Sma' Glen." I do not know that it was ever called "Gen Almain," till Wordsworth gave it that remarkably un-Scottish name.* It must have been a warm August day, after a tract of dry weather, when he went through it, or the Almond would scarcely have been called a "small streamlet." In many seasons of the year the feature of the Glen would be more appropriately indicated by what is here expressly contrasted with it, a place

Where sights are rough, and sounds are wild,
 And everything unreconciled.

But the characterization of the place, in the stillness of an autumn afternoon, is as true to nature as any of Wordsworth's interpretations of the spirit of the hills or vales of Westmoreland. As yet there is no farm-house, scarcely even a sheiling, to "break the silence of this Dell."

The following is Dorothy Wordsworth's description of it :—"Entered the glen at a small hamlet at some distance from the head, and, turning aside a few steps, ascended a hillock which commanded a view to the top of it—a very sweet scene, a green valley, not very narrow, with a few scattered trees and huts, almost invisible in a misty green of afternoon light. At this hamlet we crossed a bridge, and the road led us down the glen, which had become exceedingly narrow, and so continued to the end : the hills on both sides heathy and rocky, very steep, but continuous ; the rock not single or overhanging, not scooped into caverns, or sounding with torrents ; there are no trees, no houses, no traces of cultivation, not one outstanding object. It is truly a solitude, the road even making it appear still more so ; the bottom of the valley is mostly

¹ 1827.

And happy feelings . . .

1807.

* In the Statistical Account of Scotland, however, drawn up by the parish ministers of the county, and edited by Sir George Sinclair, both the river and the glen are spelt Almon by the Rev. Mr Erskine, who wrote the account of Monzie Parish in Perthshire. This was in 1795. A recent authority states :—" 'Glenamon,' in Ayrshire, and 'Glenalmond,' in Perthshire, are both from the corrupted spelling of the word 'Avon,' which derives from its being very nearly the pronunciation of the Gaelic word for 'a river.' These names are from 'Gleann-abhuinn,' that is, 'the valley of the river.'" (See the Gaelic Topography of Scotland, by James A. Robertson, Edinburgh, 1859.)—ED.

smooth and level, the brook not noisy : everything is simple and undisturbed, and while we passed through it the whole place was shady, cool, clear, and solemn. At the end of the long valley we ascended a hill to a great height, and reached the top, when the sun, on the point of setting, shed a soft yellow light upon every eminence. The prospect was very extensive ; over hollows and plains, no towns, and few houses visible—a prospect, extensive as it was, in harmony with the secluded dell, and fixing its own peculiar character of removedness from the world, and the secure possession of the quiet of nature more deeply in our minds. The following poem was written by William on hearing of a tradition relating to it, which we did not know when we were there.”—Friday, Sept. 9, 1803.—ED.

STEPPING WESTWARD.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, “What, you are stepping westward?”

“*What, you are stepping westward?*”—“*Yea.*”

—’Twould be a *wildish* destiny,
If we, who thus together roam
In a strange Land, and far from home,
Were in this place the guests of Chance :
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
Though home or shelter he had none,
With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;
Behind, all gloomy to behold ;
And stepping westward seemed to be
A kind of *heavenly* destiny :
I liked the greeting ; ’twas a sound
Of something without place or bound ;
And seemed to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake :
 The salutation had to me
 The very sound of courtesy :
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay
 Before me in my endless way.

The following is from the Journal of the Scottish Tour :—"Sunday, Sept. 11th—We have never had a more delightful walk than this evening. Ben Lomond and the three pointed-topped mountains of Loch Lomond, which we had seen from the garrison, were very majestic under the clear sky, the lake perfectly calm, the air sweet and mild. I felt that it was much more interesting to visit a place where we have been before than it can possibly be the first time, except under peculiar circumstances. The sun had been set for some time, when, being within a quarter of a mile of the ferry man's hut, our path having led us close to the shore of the calm lake, we met two neatly-dressed women, without hats, who had probably been taking their Sunday evening's walk. One of them said to us in a friendly, soft tone of voice, 'What, you are stepping westward?' I cannot describe how affecting this simple expression was in that remote place, with the western sky in front, yet glowing with the departed sun. William wrote the following poem long after, in remembrance of his feelings and mine."—Ed.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 O listen ! for the Vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
 More welcome notes to weary bands ¹
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard ²
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago :
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day ?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
 As if her song could have no ending ;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending ;—
 I listened, motionless and still ; ³
 And, as I mounted up the hill, ⁴
 The music in my heart I bore,
 Long after it was heard no more.

¹ 1827.

So sweetly to reposing bands

1807.

² 1836.

No sweeter voice was ever heard

1807.

Such thrilling voice was never heard

1827.

³ 1820.

I listened till I had my fill ;

1807.

⁴ 1807.

And when I mounted

1827.

And as

1836.

The following is from Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal :—"As we descended, the scene became more fertile, our way being pleasantly varied ~~at~~ through coppices or open fields, and passing farm-houses, though always with an intermixture of cultivated ground. It was harvest-time, and the fields were quietly—might I be allowed to say pensively!—enlivened by small companies of reapers. It is not uncommon in the more lonely parts of the Highlands to see a single person so employed. The following poem was suggested to William by a beautiful sentence in Thomas Wilkinson's 'Tour in Scotland.'"—13th Sept. 1803.

In a note appended to the volume in which these "Recollections of a Tour in Scotland" appear, Principal Shairp remarks, p. 316, "Probably one of Wilkinson's poems, of which Wordsworth speaks occasionally in his letters." I doubt if it is to a "Poem" that the sister refers. In Wilkinson's "Tours to the British Mountains," published in 1824, the first portion—which is almost wholly in prose—consists of his journey in Scotland (it took place in 1787); and the following sentence occurs in the record of his travels near Loph Lomond (p. 12), "Passed a female who was reaping alone: she sung in Erse, as she bended over her sickle; the sweetest human voice I ever heard: her strains were tenderly melancholy, and felt delicious, long after they were heard no more." There can be no doubt that this is the identical sentence referred to by Dorothy Wordsworth. Thomas Wilkinson was the friend, in whose memory Wordsworth wrote the poem "To the Spade of a Friend, composed while we were labouring together in his pleasure-grounds." But, as the "Tours" were only published in 1824, and as *The Solitary Reaper* was written in 1803, and published in 1807, it could not have been to the printed volume that Miss Wordsworth referred. The difficulty is cleared up by the note appended to the edd. 1807 and 1815. "This poem was suggested by a beautiful sentence in a MS. Tour in Scotland, written by a friend, the last line being taken from it *verbatim*." I have received some additional information about this MS., and Wordsworth's knowledge of it from Mr Wilson Robinson of Whinfellhall, Cockermouth, to whom I have been also indebted for an account of *The Lorton Yew Tree* (see p. 323). The subject, and the relation between Wordsworth and Wilkinson is sufficiently interesting to warrant my quoting from a letter of Mr Robinson's, dated July 1880 :—

"WHINFELLHALL, COCKERMOUTH, 3/7/1880.

"I have made further enquiry and research respecting T. Wilkinson's account, with some further light upon it.

"I may premise that John Pemberton, a minister of the Society of Friends from Philadelphia, travelled many years in Europe on a religious visit, and it was to accompany him as companion and helper (though not a minister himself) that Thomas Wilkinson visited Scotland in 1787. I have applied to Mary G. T. Carr of Silloth, a grand-daughter of T. Wilkinson's sister, who has a manuscript copy made by herself from the

original manuscript of the 'Tour,' and she sends me the following as the form in which the sentence stands as copied by her :—'Passed by a female reaping ~~alone~~ and singing in Erse as she bent over her sickle. The sweetest human voice I ever heard. Her strains were tenderly melancholy, and felt delicious long after they were no more heard.' The difference from the printed copy, 1824, is very slight. The question here arises, was the 'Tour' not printed before 1824? On this point I find the following evidence :—

"1st. T. Wilkinson had a plain, simple-minded friend residing at Eaglesfield (Dalton's birth-place), with whom he corresponded, and I have now had the opportunity of perusing a number of his letters to T. W. On 6/2/1789, Robinson says, 'On the perusal of thy Tour through the Highlands, I may own thou hast excelled in describing romantic and picturesque scenes. . . . If thou hast *firmly* resolved not to publish it, I think, if life and health continue, to request it again some time in the summer, in order to take a fair copy, for the more I read and discourse about it the more I value it.'

"10/11/1789.—He says, 'Please to bring with thee one of thy journals (which can be best spared) for me to copy.' On 14/11/1790 he says, after asking T. W. to 'come over,' 'I find copying the interesting journal to the Highlands an agreeable employment.' This correspondence extends down to 1807, but in none of the letters do I find any reference to a printed Tour.

"2d. There is no other Tour mentioned in Smith's Catalogue except 'Tours to the British Mountains, 1824,' the first, and apparently the only, edition.

"3d. That Wilkinson was reluctant to publish his more purely literary compositions is further shown by a remark in a letter from Mary Leadbeater of Ballitore to the poet Crabbe, dated 27/5/1824,—'I hear that my friend Thomas Wilkinson is publishing. It is what I often urged him to do, and repeated my arguments after I saw Bernard Barton so honoured by the Edinburgh Review. . . . This simple husbandman is well known, and of consequence well esteemed by persons of high rank. Lord Lonsdale, who is his neighbour, can appreciate his judgment, genius, and taste, and takes pleasure in introducing him to his noble guests.' Leadbeater Papers, Correspondence with the Rev. George Crabbe. Letter XX.

"4th. This leads me, lastly, to the fact of the acquaintance of the Wordsworths with Wilkinson—possibly through Lord Lonsdale. The poet's 'Address to the Spade of a Friend' is said by him to have been, 'composed while we were labouring together in his pleasure ground,' and indicates considerable acquaintance with its master. The date attached to this (8vo ed. 1849) is 1804. The same ed. gives 1803 as the date of the 'Solitary Reaper.' I do not know what authority there is for this date. Dorothy Wordsworth copies this poem into her journal in 1805.

"From all this evidence, I conclude that Wilkinson's 'Tour to the Highlands' was shown in manuscript to his friends soon after his return ;—that he was not only willing to show it, but even to allow it to be copied, though reluctant to publish it ;—that there was sufficient intimacy between him and the Wordsworths to account for his showing or lending the manuscript to them, especially as they had travelled over much of the same ground, and would therefore be more interested in it ; and that in fact it was never published till 1824. It follows, therefore, that it must have been a work still in manuscript to which Dorothy Wordsworth refers as a 'Tour in Scotland'—a 'beautiful sentence' in which suggested the 'Solitary Reaper.'—I am, very sincerely, &c.

"WILSON ROBINSON."

WHINFELLHALL, 17/3/1882.

"A copy of a letter from the poet Wordsworth to Thos. Wilkinson of Yanwath, has been sent me by Mary Carr, of which I enclose a copy. The letter throws further light on the degree of intimacy subsisting between Wordsworth and Wilkinson, shows that the former not only saw, but had Wilkinson's Journal in his possession, and confirms the idea that it was in manuscript, both by the extraordinary care shown about its return, and in its being placed among Wordsworth's manuscripts instead of on his book-shelves. The letter was accompanied by a copy of the lines to Wilkinson's spade. I copy the whole of the letter, as it may be of some interest. M. Carr also informs me that she finds among Wilkinson's papers manuscript copies of the 'Cuckoo' and the 'Solitary Reaper' in Wordsworth's hand-writing, copies of which I enclose.—I remain, very truly, &c.

"WILSON ROBINSON."

WORDSWORTH TO T. WILKINSON.

"COLLEORTON, ASHEY DE LA ZOUCHE,
"LEICESTERSHIRE, November.

"MR. DEAR FRIEND,—I was prevented by a most severe cold from seeing you as I intended, and meeting the person at Patterdale about the horses. I was indeed much indisposed for six or seven weeks. You will excuse me, with your usual goodness, for not having written sooner ; but what shall I say in apology for your Journal, which is now locked up with my manuscripts at Grasmere. As I could not go over to your part of the country myself, my intention was to have taken it with me to Kendal, and then have delivered it to George Braithwaite, or some friend of yours, to be carefully transmitted to you ; unluckily, most unluckily, in the hurry of departure, I forgot it, together with two of my own manuscripts which were along with it ; and I am afraid you will be standing in great need of it. If you do, it may be procured, for I

can write to Grasmere to that effect ; it is there in perfect safety, along with papers of my own. If you wish it, I shall write to have it taken out and carried over to you by some ~~trusty~~ person, or if you or any of your friends should be passing that way I could send such orders to Grasmere, that it may be in readiness for you or them whenever it should be convenient to call for it. If you do not want it, it is in a place where it can take no injury, and I may have the pleasure of delivering it to you myself in the spring.

"I am now at Coleorton, in Leicestershire, with all my family, our house at Grasmere being too small for us to winter in ; we shall return in spring. The house we occupy is one of Sir George Beaumont's, and very roomy and convenient. We like our situation very well, and are all well in health.

"On the other page you will find a copy of verses addressed to an implement of yours ; they are supposed to have been composed that afternoon when you and I were labouring together in your pleasure-ground, an afternoon I often think of with pleasure ; as indeed I do of your beautiful retirement there.

"I have in the press a poetical publication that will extend to a couple of small volumes, 150 pages or so a-piece, and I mean to publish the above verses in it, to which I do not suppose you will have any objections ; if you should, I cannot permit them to have any force, therefore not a word upon the subject ! I shall send you the books as soon as they are out, tell me how. My wife, sister, and Miss Hutchinson, who is with us, join with me in most kind remembrances to yourself and both your sisters. Write soon. Farewell, — Most affectionately yours. WM. WORDSWORTH." — ED.

ADDRESS

TO

KILCHURN CASTLE, UPON LOCH AWE.

Comp. 1803. — and later 1827.

[The first three lines were thrown off at the moment I first caught sight of the Ruin, from a small eminence by the wayside ; the rest was added many years after.]

"From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view,—a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore, backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water,—mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine ; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn

grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately—not dismantled of turrets—nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin.”—*Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War! the mountain Stream
 Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest
 Is come, and thou art silent in thy age;
 Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds are caught
 Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs,
 Oh! there is life that breathes not; Powers there are
 That touch each other to the quick in modes
 Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
 No soul to dream of. What art thou, from care
 Cast off—abandoned by thy rugged Sire,
 Not by soft Peace adopted; though, in place
 And in dimension, such that thou might'st seem
 But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,
 Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills
 Might crush, nor know that it had suffered harm
 Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims
 To reverence, suspends his own; submitting
 All that the God of Nature hath conferred,
 All that he holds in common with the stars,¹
 To the memorial majesty of Time
 Impersonated in thy calm decay!

Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unproved!
 Now, while a farewell gleam of evening light
 Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,
 Do thou, in turn, be paramount; and rule
 Over the pomp and beauty of a scene
 Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and woods, unite

To pay thee homage ; and with these are joined,
 In willing admiration and respect,
 Two Hearts, which in thy presence might be called
 Youthful as Spring—Shade of departed Power,
 Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,
 The chronicle were welcome that should call
 Into the compass of distinct regard
 The toils and struggles of thy infant years !¹
 Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice ;
 Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,
 Frozen by distance ; so, majestic Pile,
 To the perception of this Age, appear
 Thy fierce beginnings, softened and subdued
 And quieted in character—the strife,
 The pride, the fury uncontrollable,
 Lost on the aerial heights of the Crusades !” *

The following is a fuller extract from Miss Wordsworth's Journal than is given in the Fenwick note which precedes the poem :—“ When we had ascended half-way up the hill, directed by the man, I took a nearer foot-path, and at the top came in view of a most impressive scene, a ruined castle on an island almost in the middle of the last compartment of the lake, backed by a mountain cove, down which came a roaring stream. The castle occupied every foot of the island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water ; mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine between ; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the castle was wild, yet stately, not dismantled of its turrets, nor the walls broken down, though completely in ruin. After having stood some minutes I joined William on the highroad, and both wishing to stay longer near this place, we requested the man to drive his little boy on to Dalmally, about two miles further, and leave the car at the inn. He told us the ruin was called Kilchurn Castle, that it belonged to Lord Breadalbane, and had been built by one of the ladies of that family for her defence, during her lord's absence at the Crusades ; for which

¹ 1845.

The toils and struggles of thy infancy, . 1927.

* The tradition is, that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.

purpose she levied a tax of seven years' rent upon her tenants ; he said that from that side of the lake it did not appear, in very dry weather, to stand upon an island, but that it was possible to go over to it without being wet-shod. We were very lucky in seeing it after a great flood ; for its enchanting effect was chiefly owing to its situation in the lake, a decayed palace rising out of the plain of waters ! I have called it a palace, for such feeling it gave me, though having been built as a place of defence, a castle or fortress. We turned again and reascended the hill, and sate a long time in the middle of it looking on the castle, and the huge mountain cove opposite, and William addressing himself to the ruin, poured out these verses."—August 31, 1803.—Ed.

ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

[I have since been told that I was misinformed as to the burial-place of Rob Roy. If so, I may plead in excuse that I wrote on apparently good authority, namely, that of a well educated lady who lived at the head of the lake, within a mile or less of the point indicated as containing the remains of one so famous in the neighbourhood.]

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known ; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small pinfold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A famous man is Robin Hood,
The English ballad-singer's joy !
And Scotland has a thief as good,
An outlaw of as daring mood ;
She has her brave ROB ROY !
Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
And let us chant a passing stave,
In honour of that Hero brave !

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart
And wondrous length and strength of arm :
Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave ;
Forgive me if the phrase be strong ;—
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
 Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave ;
As wise in thought as bold in deed :
For in the principles of things
 He sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, “ What need of books ?
Burn all the statutes and their shelves :
They stir us up against our kind ;
 And worse, against ourselves.

We have a passion—make a law,
Too false to guide us or control !
And for the law itself we fight
 In bitterness of soul.

And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
Distinctions that are plain and few :
These find I graven on my heart :
 That tells me what to do.

The creatures see of flood and field,
And those that travel on the wind !
With them no strife can last ; they live
 In peace, and peace of mind.

For why ?—because the good old rule
Suffices them, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
 And they should keep who can.

A lesson that is quickly learned,
A signal this which all can see !
Thus nothing here provokes the strong
To wanton cruelty.

All freakishness of mind is checked ;
He tamed, who foolishly aspires ;
While to the measure of his might
Each fashions his desires.

All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit :
'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
And who is to submit.

Since, then, the rule of right is plain,¹
And longest life is but a day ;
To have my ends, maintain my rights,
I'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,
Through summer heat and winter snow :
The Eagle, he was lord above,
And Rob was lord below.

So was it—*would*, at least, have been
But through untowardness of fate ;
For Polity was then too strong—
He came an age too late ;

Or shall we say an age too soon ?
For, were the bold Man living *now*,
How might he flourish in his pride,
With buds on every bough !

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
Would all have seemed but paltry things,
Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,
To these few meagre Vales confined ;
But thought how wide the world, the times
How fairly to his mind !

And to his Sword he would have said,
“ Do Thou my sovereign will enact
From land to land through half the earth !
Judge thou of law and fact !

'Tis fit that we should do our part,
Becoming, that mankind should learn
That we are not to be surpassed
In fatherly concern.

Of old things all are over old,
Of good things none are good enough :—
We'll show that we can help to frame
A world of other stuff.

I, too, will have my kings that take
From me the sign of life and death ;
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,
Obedient to my breath.”

And, if the word had been fulfilled,
As *might* have been, then, thought of joy !
France would have had her present Boast,
And we our own Rob Roy !¹

Oh ! say not so ; compare them not ;
I would not wrong thee, Champion brave !
Would wrong thee nowhere ; least of all
Here standing by thy grave.

For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,
Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan !
Hadst this to boast of ; thou didst love
The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
With us who now behold the light,
Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,
And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand ;
And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
Had thine at their command.²

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays
Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,
And by Loch Lomond's braes !

¹ 1827.

And we our brave Rob Roy !

1807.

² 1815.

Had Robin's to command.

1807.

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
Are faces that attest the same ;
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,
At sound of ROB ROY's name.

From Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal of the Scotch Tour, August 27, 1803 :—"We mentioned Rob Roy, and the eyes of all glistened ; even the lady of the house, who was very diffident, and no great talker, exclaimed, 'He was a good man, Rob Roy ! he had been dead only about eighty years, had lived in the next farm, which belonged to him, and there his bones were laid.' He was a famous swordsman. Having an arm much longer than other men, he had a greater command with his sword. As a proof of the length of his arm, they told us that he could garter his tartan stockings below the knee without stooping, and added a dozen different stories of single combats, which he had fought, all in perfect good humour, merely to prove his prowess. I daresay they had stories of this kind which would hardly have been exhausted in the long evenings of a whole December week, Rob Roy being as famous here as even Robin Hood was in the forest of Sherwood ; *he* also robbed from the rich, giving to the poor, and defending them from oppression. They tell of his confining the factor of the Duke of Montrose in one of the islands of Loch Ketterine, after having taken his money from him—the Duke's rents—in open day, while they were sitting at table. He was a formidable enemy of the Duke, but being a small laird against a greater, was overcome at last, and forced to resign all his lands on the Braes of Loch Lomond, including the caves which we visited, on account of the money he had taken from the Duke and could not repay."

Sept. 12.—"Descended into Glengyle, above Loch Ketterine, and passed through Mr Macfarlane's grounds, that is, through the whole of the glen, where there was now no house left but his. We stopped at his door to inquire after the family, though with little hope of finding them at home, having seen a large company at work in a hay-field, whom we conjectured to be his whole household, as it proved, except a servant-maid who answered our enquiries. We had sent the ferryman forward from the head of the glen to bring the boat round from the place where he left it to the other side of the lake. Passed the same farm-house we had such good reason to remember, and went up to the burying-ground that stood so sweetly near the water-side. The ferryman had told us that Rob Roy's grave was there, so we could not pass on without going up to the spot. There were several tombstones, but the inscriptions were either worn-out or unintelligible to us, and the place choked up with nettles and brambles. You will remember the description I have given of the spot. I have nothing here to add, except the following poem which it suggested to William."

Rob Roy was buried at the Kirkton of Balquhiddar, near the outlet of Loch Voil in Perthshire. There are three sculptured stones in the rude burial-place of the Macgregors, at the eastern end of the old church. The one with the long claymore marks the resting-place of Rob Roy's wife; the one opposite on the other side is the tomb of his eldest son; and the central stone, more elaborately carved, marks the grave of the hero himself.—ED.

SONNET.

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE.

Comp. 1803. ——— Pub. 1807.

[The castle here mentioned was Nidpath near Peebles. The person alluded to was the then Duke of Queensbury. The fact was told to me by Walter Scott.]

DEGENERATE Douglas! oh, the unworthy Lord
Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
And love of havoc (for with such disease
Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word
To level with the dust a noble horde,
A brotherhood of venerable Trees,
Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
Beggared and outraged!—Many hearts deplored
The fate of those old Trees; and oft with pain
The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed:
For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

“Sunday, September 18th.—The town of Peebles is on the banks of the Tweed. After breakfast walked up the river to Neidpath Castle, about a mile and a half from the town. The castle stands upon a green hill, over-looking the Tweed, a strong square-towered edifice, neglected and desolate, though not in ruin, the garden overgrown with grass, and the high walls that fenced it broken down. The Tweed winds between green steeps, upon which, and close to the river side, large flocks of sheep pasturing; higher still are the grey mountains; but I need not describe

the scene, for William has done it better than I could do in a sonnet which he wrote the same day ; the five last lines, at least, of his poem will impart to you more of the feeling of the place than it would be possible for me to do.”—(From Dorothy Wordsworth’s Journal, 1803.)—ED.

YARROW UNVISITED.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

(See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow ; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton, beginning—

“ Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow ! ”)

FROM Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled ;
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled ;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my “ *winsome Marrow*,”
“ Whate’er betide, we’ll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow.”

“ Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, ’tis their own ;
Each maiden to her dwelling !
On Yarrow’s banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !
But we will downward¹ with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

¹ 1882.

There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us ;
And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus ;
There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow :
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow ?

What's Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under ?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder."
—Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn ;
My True-love sighed for sorrow ;
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow !

" Oh ! green," said I, " are Yarrow's holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing !
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,*
But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,
We'll wander Scotland thorough ;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
The swan on still St Mary's Lake
Float double, swan and shadow !

* See Hamilton's Ballad as above. 1807.

We will not see them ; will not go,
 To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;
 Enough if in our hearts we know
 There's such a place as Yarrow.

Be Yarrow's stream unseen, unknown !
 It must, or we shall rue it :
 We have a vision of our own ;
 Ah ! why should we undo it ?
 The treasured dreams of times long past,
 We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !
 For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
 'Twill be another Yarrow.

If Care with freezing years should come,
 And wandering seem but folly,—
 Should we be loth to stir from home,
 And yet be melancholy ;
 Should life be dull, and spirits low,
 'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,
 That earth has something yet to show,
 The bonny holms of Yarrow !”

“ We left the Tweed when we were within about a mile and a half or two miles of Clovenford, where we were to lodge. Turned up the side of a hill, and went along sheep-grounds till we reached the spot—a single stone house, without a tree near it or to be seen from it. On our mentioning Mr Scott's name, the woman of the house showed us all possible civility, but her slowness was really amusing. I should suppose it a house little frequented, for there is no appearance of an inn. Mr Scott, who she told me was a very clever gentleman, ‘ goes there in the fishing season ;’ but indeed Mr Scott is respected everywhere ; I believe that by favour of his name one might be hospitably entertained throughout all the borders of Scotland. We dined and drank tea—did not walk out, for there was no temptation ; a confined barren prospect from the window.

“ At Clovenford, being so near to the Yarrow, we could not but think

of the possibility of going thither, but came to the conclusion of reserving the pleasure for some future time, in consequence of which, after our return, William wrote the poem which I shall here transcribe."—(From Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, Sept. 18, 1803.)—Ed.

THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

At Jedborough my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days ; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

AGE ! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers,
And call a train of laughing Hours ;
And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;
And thou, too, mingle in the ring !
Take to thy heart a new delight ;
If not, make merry in despite
That there is One who scorns thy power :—¹
But dance ! for under Jedborough Tower
A Matron dwells who, though she bears
The weight of more than seventy years,
Lives in the light of youthful glee,²
And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay ! start not at that Figure—there !
Him who is rooted to his chair !
Look at him—look again ! for he
Hath long been of thy family.

¹ 1827.

For there is one 1807.

² 1836.

There liveth in the prime of glee,
A woman, whose years are seventy three, 1807.

A matron dwells, who though she bears
Our mortal complement of years, 1827.

With legs that move not, if they can,
 And useless arms, a trunk of man,
 He sits, and with a vacant eye ;
 A sight to make a stranger sigh !
 Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom :
 His world is in this single room ;
 Is this a place for mirthful cheer ?¹
 Can merry-making enter here ?

The joyous Woman is the Mate
 Of him in that forlorn estate !
 He breathes a subterraneous damp ;
 But bright as Vesper shines her lamp :
 He is as mute as Jedborough Tower :
 She jocund as it was of yore,
 With all its bravery on ; in times
 When all alive with merry chimes,
 Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
 It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron ! and thy due
 Is praise, heroic praise, and true !
 With admiration I behold
 Thy gladness unsubdued and bold :
 Thy looks, thy gestures, all present
 The picture of a life well spent :
 This do I see ; and something more ;
 A strength unthought of heretofore !
 Delighted am I for thy sake ;
 And yet a higher joy partake :

Our Human-nature throws away
 Its second twilight, and looks gay ;
 A land of promise and of pride
 Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah ! see her helpless Charge ! enclosed
 Within himself it seems, composed ;
 To fear of loss, and hope of gain,
 The strife of happiness and pain,
 Utterly dead ! yet, in the guise
 Of little infants, when their eyes
 Begin to follow to and fro
 The persons that before them go,
 He tracks her motions, quick or slow.
 Her buoyant spirit can prevail
 Where common cheerfulness would fail ;
 She strikes upon him with the heat
 Of July suns ; he feels it sweet ;
 An animal delight though dim !
 'Tis all that now remains for him.

The more I looked, I wondered more—
 And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,¹
 Some inward trouble suddenly
 Broke from the Matron's strong black eye²
 A remnant of uneasy light,
 A flash of something over-bright !

¹ 1827.

I looked, I scanned her o'er and o'er ;
 The more I looked I wondered more ;

1807.

² 1836.

When suddenly I seemed to espy
 A trouble in her strong black eye ;
 A moment gave me to espy

1807.

1827.

Nor long this mystery did detain
 My thoughts;—she told in pensive strain¹
 That she had borne a heavy yoke,
 Been stricken by a twofold stroke;
 Ill health of body; and had pined
 Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it!—but let praise ascend
 To Him who is our lord and friend!
 Who from disease and suffering
 Hath called for thee a second spring;
 Repaid thee for that sore distress
 By no untimely joyousness;
 Which makes of thine a blissful state;
 And cheers thy melancholy Mate!

“We were received with hearty welcome by a good woman, who, though above seventy years old, moved about as briskly as if she was only seventeen. Those parts of the house which we were to occupy were neat and clean; she showed me every corner, and, before I had been ten minutes in the house, opened her very drawers that I might see what a stock of linen she had; then asked how long we should stay, and said she wished we were come for three months. She was a most remarkable person; the alacrity with which she ran up-stairs when we rung the bell, and guessed at, and strove to prevent, our wants was surprising; she had a quick eye, and keen strong features, and a joyousness in her motions, like what used to be in old Molly when she was particularly elated. I found afterwards that she had been subject to fits of dejection and ill-health: we then conjectured that her overflowing gaiety and strength might in part be attributed to the same cause as her former dejection. Her husband was deaf and infirm, and sate in a chair with scarcely the power to move a limb—an affecting contrast! The old woman said they had been a very hard-working pair; they had wrought like slaves at their trade—her husband had been a currier; and she told me how they had portioned off their daughters with money, and each a feather bed, and that in their old age they had laid out the little they could spare in building and

¹ 1827.

And how she made this matter plain,
 And told me in a thoughtful strain,

furnishing that house, and she added with pride that she had lived in her youth in the family of Lady Egerton, who was no high lady, and now was in the habit of coming to her house whenever she was at Jedburgh, and a hundred other things ; for when she once began with Lady Egerton, she did not know how to stop, nor did I wish it, for she was very entertaining. Mr Scott sat with us an hour or two, and repeated a part of the Lay of the Last Minstrel. When he was gone our hostess came to see if we wanted anything, and to wish us good-night. On all occasions her manners were governed by the same spirit : there was no withdrawing one's attention from her. We were so much interested that William, long afterwards, thought it worth while to express in verse the sensations which she had excited, and which then remained as vividly in his mind as at the moment when we lost sight of Jedburgh."—(From Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, Sept. 20, 1803.)—ED.

ON APPROACHING HOME, AFTER A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

Comp. Sept. 25, 1803. — Pub. 1815.

[This was actually composed the last day of our tour between Dalston and Grasmere.]

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-dale !¹
Say that we come, and come by this day's light ;
Fly upon swiftest wing round field and height,²
But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale ;
There let a mystery of joy prevail,
The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,³
And Rover whine, as at a second sight
Of near-approaching good that shall not fail :

¹ 1836.

Fly, some kind spirit, fly to Grasmere Vale ! 1815.

² 1836.

Glad tidings ! spread them over field and height, 1815.

³ 1836.

The kitten frolic with unruly might, 1815.

The happy kitten bound with frolic might, 1827.

And from that Infant's face let joy appear;
 Yea, let our Mary's one companion child—
 That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled
 With intimations manifold and dear,
 While we have wandered over wood and wild—
 Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

"Sunday, September 25, 1803.—A beautiful autumnal day. Breakfasted at a public-house by the road-side; dined at Threlkeld; arrived at home between eight and nine o'clock, where we found Mary in perfect health, Joanna Hutchinson with her, and little John asleep in the clothes-basket by the fire."—(From Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, 1803.)—Ed.

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY.

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER RETURNING TO THE
 VALE OF GRASMERE.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

[The story was told me by George Mackereth, for many years parish-clerk of Grasmere. He had been an eye-witness of the occurrence. The vessel in reality was a washing-tub, which the little fellow had met with on the shores of the Loch.]

Now we are tired of hoisterous joy,
 Have romped enough, my little Boy!
 Jane hangs her head upon my breast,
 And you shall bring your stool and rest;
 This corner is your own.

There! take your seat, and let me see
 That you can listen quietly:
 And, as I promised, I will tell
 That strange adventure which befel
 A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland* Boy!—why call him so?
 Because, my Darlings, ye must know
 That, under hills which rise like towers,¹
 Far higher hills than these of ours!
 He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight,
 The sun, the day; the stars, the night;
 Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
 Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
 Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,
 Nor had a melancholy mind;
 For God took pity on the Boy,
 And was his friend; and gave him joy
 Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above
 Her other children him did love:
 For, was she here, or was she there,
 She thought of him with constant care,
 And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when, clad
 In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
 And bonnet with a feather gay,
 To Kirk he on the sabbath day
 Went hand in hand with her.

¹ 1836.

In land where many a mountain towers,

1807.

A dog, too, had he ; not for need,
But one to play with and to feed ;
Which would have led him, if bereft
Of company or friends, and left
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow—
And thus from house to house would go ;
And all were pleased to hear and see,
For none made sweeter melody
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream ;
Both when he heard the eagles scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood ;
But one of mighty size, and strange ;
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day
The great Sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills,
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong : *

See the *In Memoriam* of Tennyson, stanza XIX.

Then twice a day the Severn fills ;
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the bubbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills, &c.

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns, on errand still the same ;
This did it when the earth was new ;
And this for evermore will do,
 As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that safely ride
Between the woods and lofty rocks ;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
 Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
The blind Boy always had his share ;
Whether of mighty towns, or valleys
With warmer suns and softer gales,
 Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
When from the water-side he heard
The shouting, and the jolly cheers ;
The bustle of the mariners
 In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail ?
For he must never handle sail ;
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,
 Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,
What sin would be upon her head
If she should suffer this : " My Son,
Whate'er you do, leave this undone
 The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side
 Still sounding with the sounding tide,
 And heard the billows leap and dance,
 Without a shadow of mischance,
 Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,
 Ye soon shall know how this befel)
 He in a vessel of his own,
 On the swift flood is hurrying down,¹
 Down to the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more
 May human creature leave the shore!²
 If this or that way he should stir,
 Woe to the poor blind Mariner!
 For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him?—Ye have seen
 The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
 Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright;
 Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
 Are brought in ships from far.³

¹ 1836.

On the swift water hurrying down
 Towards the mighty Sea. 1807.

On the swift flood is hurrying down
 Towards the mighty Sea. 1827.

² 1815.

Did human creature 1807.

³ 1815.

But say, what was it? Thought of fear!
 Well may ye tremble when ye hear
 —A household Tub, like one of those,
 Which women use to wash their clothes,
 This carried the blind Boy. 1807.

Such gifts had those seafaring men
 Spread round that haven in the glen ;
 Each hut, perchance, might have its own ;
 And to the Boy they all were known—
 He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell
 Which he, poor Child, had studied well ;
 A shell of ample size, and light
 As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
 That sportive dolphins drew ¹

And, as a Coracle that braves
 On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,
 This shell upon the deep would swim,
 And gaily lift its fearless brim
 Above the tossing surge.²

And this the little blind Boy knew :
 And he a story strange yet true
 Had heard, how in a shell like this
 An English Boy, O thought of bliss !
 Had stoutly launched from shore ;

1820.

And one, the rarest, was a Shell
 Which he, poor Child, had studied well ;
 The shell of a green Turtle, thin
 And hollow ;—you might sit therein,
 It was so wide and deep.

1815.

1820.

'Twas even the largest of its kind,
 Large, thin, and light, as birch-tree rind,
 So light a Shell that it would swim,
 And gaily lift its fearless brim
 Above the tossing waves.

1815.

Launched from the margin of a bay
 Among the Indian isles, where lay
 His father's ship, and had sailed far—
 To join that gallant ship of war,
 In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
 The house that held this prize ; and, led
 By choice or chance, did thither come
 One day when no one was at home,
 And found the door unbarred.

While there he sate, alone and blind,
 That story flashed upon his mind ;—
 A bold thought roused him, and he took
 The shell from out its secret nook,
 And bore it on his head.¹

He launched his vessel,—and in pride
 Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,
 Stepped into it—his thoughts all free
 As the light breezes that with glee
 Sang through the adventurer's hair.²

¹ 1827.

And bore it in his arms.

1815.

The last seven stanzas not in edition 1807.

² 1827.

Close to the water he had found
 This Vessel, pushed it from dry ground,
 Went into it ; and without dread,
 Following the fancies in his head,
 He paddled up and down !

1807.

And with the happy burthen hied,
 And pushed it from Loch Leven's side,
 Stepped into it ; and without dread,

.

1815.

A while he stood upon his feet ;
He felt the motion—took his seat ;
Still better pleased as more and more
The tide retreated from the shore,
And sucked, and sucked him in.¹

And there he is in face of Heaven.
How rapidly the child is driven !
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,
He thus had gone, ere he was seen
By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me,
What shrieking and what misery !
For many saw ; among the rest
His Mother, she who loved him best,
She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,
It is the triumph of his joy !
The bravest traveller in balloon,
Mounting as if to reach the moon,
Was never half so blessed.

And let him, let him go his way,
Alone, and innocent, and gay !
For, if good Angels love to wait
On the forlorn unfortunate,
This Child will take no harm.

¹ 1827.

And dallied thus, till from the shore
The tide retreating more and more
Had sucked and sucked him in.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,
The cries which broke from old and young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
Are stifled—all is still.

And quickly with a silent crew
A boat is ready to pursue ;
And from the shore their course they take,
And swiftly down the running lake
They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace ;
So have ye seen the fowler chase
On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast
A youngling of the wild duck's nest
With deftly-lifted oar ;

Or as the wily sailors crept
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)
The hapless creature which did dwell
Erewhile within the dancing shell,
They steal upon their prey.¹

With sound the least that can be made,
They follow, more and more afraid,
More cautious as they draw more near ;
But in his darkness he can hear,
And guesses their intent.

¹ The two last stanzas are not in edition 1807.

"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—he then cried out,
"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—with eager shout;¹
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,
And what he meant was, "Keep away,
And leave me to myself!"

Alas! and when he felt their hands—
You've often heard of magic wands,
That with a motion overthrow
A palace of the proudest show,
Or melt it into air:

So all his dreams—that inward light
With which his soul had shone so bright—
All vanished:—'twas a heartfelt cross
To him, a heavy bitter loss,
As he had ever known.

But hark! a gratulating voice,
With which the very hills rejoice:
'Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly
Have watched the event, and now can see
That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,
Full sure they were a happy band,
Which gathering round, did on the banks
Of that great Water give God thanks,
And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart
 The blind Boy's little dog took part ;
 He leapt about, and oft did kiss
 His master's hands in sign of bliss,
 With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,
 She who had fainted with her fear,
 Rejoiced when waking she espies
 The Child ; when she can trust her eyes,
 And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,
 When he was in the house again :
 Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes,
 She kissed him—how could she chastise !¹
 She was too happy far.

Thus after he had fondly braved
 The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved ;
 And, though his fancies had been wild,
 Yet he was pleased and reconciled
 To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell
 Still do they keep the Turtle-shell ;
 And long the story will repeat
 Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,
 And how he was preserved.²

[NOTE.—It is recorded in Dampier's Voyages, that a boy, son of the captain of a Man-of-War, seated himself in a Turtle-shell, and floated in it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay at anchor at the

¹ 1832.

She could not blame him, or chastise.

1807.

² This stanza not in edition 1807.

distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a Friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less-elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually entrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Leven, as was related to me by an eye-witness.]

The Loch Leven referred to is a sea-loch in Argyllshire, into which the tidal water flows with some force from Loch Linnhe at Ballachulish.

By night and day

The great Sea-water finds its way

Through long, long windings of the hills.

The "friend" referred to, in the preceding note, was doubtless his sister.—ED.

SONNETS.

OCTOBER, 1803.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

One might believe that natural miseries
Had blasted France, and made of it a land
Unfit for men ; and that in one great band
Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at ease.
But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and breeze
Shed gentle favours ; rural works are there,
And ordinary business without care ;
Spot rich in all things that can soothe and please !
How piteous then that there should be such dearth
Of knowledge ; that whole myriads should unite
To work against themselves such fell despite :
Should come in phrensy and in drunken mirth,
Impatient to put out the only light
Of Liberty that yet remains on earth !

THERE IS A BONDAGE WORSE, FAR WORSE, TO BEAR.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

There is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear¹
Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor, and wall,
Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall :
'Tis his who walks about in the open air,

¹ 1827.

. which is worse to bear

1807.

One of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear
 Their fetters in their souls. For who could be,
 Who, even the best, in such condition, free
 From self-reproach, reproach that he must share ¹
 With Human nature? Never be it ours
 To see the sun how brightly it will shine,
 And know that noble feelings, manly powers,
 Instead of gathering strength, must droop and pine;
 And earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers
 Fade, and participate in man's decline.

OCTOBER, 1803.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

These times strike monied worldlings with dismay :
 Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
 With words of apprehension and despair :
 While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day
 And minds not stinted or untilled are given,
 Sound, healthy, children of the God of heaven,
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
 What do we gather hence but firmer faith
 That every gift of noble origin
 Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath ;
 That virtue and the faculties within
 Are vital,—and that riches are akin
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death ?

1836.

. . . which he must share

1807.

ENGLAND ! THE TIME IS COME WHEN THOU SHOULD'ST WEAN.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

England ! the time is come when thou should'st wean
 Thy heart from its emasculating food ;
 The truth should now be better understood ;
 Old things have been unsettled ; we have seen
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
 But for thy trespasses ; and, at this day,
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
 Aught good were destined, thou would'st step between.
 England ! all nations in this charge agree :
 But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
 Far—far more abject, is thine Enemy :
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight :
 Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest all with Thee !

OCTOBER, 1803.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

When, looking on the present face of things,
 I see one Man, of men the meanest too !
 Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,
 With mighty Nations for his underlings,
 The great events with which old story rings
 Seem vain and hollow ; I find nothing great :
 Nothing is left which I can venerate ;
 So that a doubt almost within me springs
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length
 Seems at the heart of all things. But, great God !
 I measure back the steps which I have trod ;
 And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the strength ¹

¹ 1827.

seeing, as I do, the strength

1807.

Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts sublime
I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

The reference is to Napoleon.—ED.

TO THE MEN OF KENT, OCTOBER, 1803.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

Vanguard of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
Ye children of a Soil that doth advance
Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
Now is the time to prove your hardiment !
To France be words of invitation sent !
They from their fields can see the countenance
Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,
And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath ;
Confirmed the charters that were yours before ;—
No parleying now ! In Britain is one breath
We all are with you now from shore to shore :—
Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death !

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY,

An invasion being expected, October 1803.

Comp. October, 1803. — Pub. 1807.

Six thousand veterans practised in war's game,
Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirlwind came
The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame ;
And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,
Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
Of the dead bodies.—'Twas a day of shame
For them whom precept and the pedantry

Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.
 O for a single hour of that Dundee
 Who on that day the word of onset gave !
 Like conquest would the Men of England see ;
 And her foes find a like inglorious grave.

The following is from Dorothy Wordsworth's 'Recollections of a Tour made in Scotland, A.D. 1803' :—" *Thursday, September 8th.* — Before breakfast we walked to the Pass of Killierankie. A very fine scene ; the river Garry forcing its way down a deep chasm between rocks, at the foot of high rugged hills covered with wood, to a great height. The pass did not, however, impress us with awe, or a sensation of difficulty or danger, according to our expectations ; but, the road being at a considerable height on the side of the hill, we at first only looked into the dell or chasm. It is much grander seen from below, near the river's bed. Everybody knows that this Pass is famous in military history. When we were travelling in Scotland, an invasion was hourly looked for, and one could not but think with some regret of the times when, from the now depopulated Highlands forty or fifty thousand men might have been poured down for the defence of the country, under such leaders as the Marquis of Montrose or the brave man who had so distinguished himself upon the ground where we were standing. I will transcribe a sonnet suggested to William by this place, and written in Oct. 1803."—ED.

ANTICIPATION, OCTOBER, 1803.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1807.

Shout, for a mighty Victory is won !
 On British ground the Invaders are laid low ;
 The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow,
 And left them lying in the silent sun,
 Never to rise again !—the work is done.
 Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful show
 And greet your sons ! drums beat and trumpets blow !
 Make merry, wives ! ye little children, stun
 Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your noise !¹
 Clap, infants, clap your hands ! Divine must be

¹ 1807.

That triumph, when the very worst, the pain
 And even the prospect of our brethren slain,
 Hath something in it which the heart enjoys :—
 In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.

This sonnet, as the title indicates, does not refer to an actual victory ; because, since the Norman conquest, no “invaders” have ever set foot “on British ground.” It was written—like the two preceding sonnets, and the one that follows it—“in anticipation” of Napoleon’s project for the invasion of England being actually carried out. But it was never realised. The assembling of the immense French army destined for this purpose—one of the finest brought together since the days of the Roman legions—between the mouths of the Seine and the Texel, roused the spirit of English patriotism as it had never been roused before. Three hundred thousand volunteers were enlisted by the 10th of August 1803 ; “all the male population of the kingdom from seventeen years of age to fifty-five were divided into classes to be successively armed and exercised” (Dyer). The story of the failure of Napoleon’s scheme for the conquest of England is too well known to be repeated in this note. Wordsworth seems to have written his sonnet in anticipation of what he believed to be the inevitable issue of events, had the French army actually landed on British soil.—ED.

LINES ON THE EXPECTED INVASION, 1803.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1845.

Come ye—who, if (which Heaven avert !) the Land
 Were with herself at strife, would take your stand,
 Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch’s side,
 And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your pride—
 Come ye—who, not less zealous, might display
 Banners at enmity with regal sway,
 And, like the Pymys and Miltons of that day,
 Think that a State would live in sounder health
 If Kingship bowed its head to Commonwealth—
 Ye too—whom no discreditable fear
 Would keep, perhaps with many a fruitless tear,
 Uncertain what to choose and how to steer—

And ye—who might mistake for sober sense
 And wise reserve the plea of indolence—
 Come ye—whate'er your creed—O waken all,
 Whate'er your temper, at your Country's call;
 Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)
 To have one Soul, and perish to a man,
 Or save this honoured Land from every Lord
 But British reason and the British sword.

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.

Comp. 1803. — Pub. 1815.

[The character of this man was described to me, and the incident upon which the verses turn was told me, by Mr Poole of Nether Stowey, with whom I became acquainted through our common friend, S. T. Coleridge. During my residence at Alfoxden, I used to see much of him, and had frequent occasions to admire the course of his daily life, especially his conduct to his labourers and poor neighbours; their virtues he carefully encouraged, and weighed their faults in the scales of charity. If I seem in these verses to have treated the weaknesses of the farmer and his transgressions too tenderly, it may in part be ascribed to my having received the story from one so averse to all harsh judgment. After his death was found in his escritoir, a lock of grey hair carefully preserved, with a notice that it had been cut from the head of his faithful shepherd, who had served him for a length of years. I need scarcely add that he felt for all men as his brothers. He was much beloved by distinguished persons—Mr Coleridge, Mr Southey, Sir H. Davy, and many others; and in his own neighbourhood was highly valued as a magistrate, a man of business, and in every other social relation. The latter part of the poem perhaps requires some apology, as being too much of an echo to the "Reverie of Poor Susan."]

'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,
 The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,
 And the small critic wielding his delicate pen,
 That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide Town ;
 His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a crown :
 And his bright eyes look brighter—set off by the streak
 Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on his cheek.¹

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—'mid the joy
 Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when a boy ;
 That countenance there fashioned,² which, spite of a stain
 That his life hath received, to the last will remain.

A Farmer he was ; and his house far and near
 Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer :
 How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury Vale
 Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt his mild ale !³

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,
 His fields seemed to know what their Master was doing ;
 And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea,
 All caught the infection—as generous as he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl,—
 The fields better suited the ease of his soul :
 He strayed through the fields like an indolent wight,
 The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

¹ 1838.

Erect as a sunflower he stands, and the streak
 Of the unfaded rose is expressed on his cheek. 1815.
 Of the unfaded rose still enlivens his cheek.

² 1842.

There fashioned that countenance, . . . 1815.

³ 1827.

. his good ale. 1815.

For Adam was simple in thought ; and the poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door ;
He gave them the best that he had ; or, to say
What less may mislead you, they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm :
The Genius of plenty preserved him from harm :
At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,
His means are run out,—he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbours he went,—all were free with their money ;
For his hive had so long been replenished with honey
That they dreamt not of dearth ;—He continued his rounds,
Knocked here—and knocked there, pounds still adding to
pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten pelf,
And something, it might be, reserved for himself :
Then (what is too true) without hinting a word,
Turned his back on the country—and off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes !—but I guess that you frame
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame ;
In him it was scarcely a business of art,
For this he did all in the *case* of his heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—
With his grey hairs he went from the brook and the green ;
And there, with small wealth but his legs and his hands,
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam assume,—
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter, and groom ;
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green and is stout ;
Twice as fast as before does his blood run about ;
You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely goes
About work that he knows, in a track that he knows ;
But often his mind is compelled to demur,
And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger is he,
Like one whose own country's far over the sea ;
And Nature, while through the great city he hies,
Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue ;
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats ?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets ;
With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he'd twelve reapers at work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits and her flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw ;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sounds of a dream.

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells at the hay ;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair,—
If you pass by at morning, you'll meet with him there.
The breath of the cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam ! when low thou art laid,
May one blade of grass spring up over thy head ;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be,
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

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A P P E N D I X .

A P P E N D I X.

NOTES SUPPLEMENTARY TO THOSE WHICH FOLLOW THE POEMS.

While the sheets of Volumes I. and II. of this edition were passing through the press, several points illustrative of the poems have come to light. These I put in a brief appendix to Volume II.

NOTE TO *Three Years she Grew in Sun and Shower*; p. 64.

Extract from a letter of S. T. Coleridge to Sir Humphrey Davy, October 9, 1800. "We mean to publish the Christabel with a long blank-verse poem of Wordsworth's, entitled The Pedlar" (this was the original name of *The Excursion*). "I assure you I think very differently of the Christabel. I would rather have written Ruth, and Nature's Lady, than a million such poems." (Fragmentary Remains, Literary and Scientific, of Sir Humphrey Davy, Bart., London, Churchill, 1858, p. 82.) 'Nature's Lady' evidently refers to the above poem beginning, "Three years she grew."

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO *Stanzas, Written in my Pocket Copy of Thomson's Castle of Indolence*; pp. 305-9.

I am indebted to Professor Dowden, of Trinity College, Dublin, for a very ingenious suggestion in reference to the second of the two characters described in these stanzas. He thinks, with others, that Coleridge is described, not in the last, but in the first half of the poem; and

that the last four verses may refer to William Calvert, the brother of Raisley Calvert, and a friend both of Wordsworth and of Coleridge. It must be remembered that Wordsworth tells us, in the Fenwick note, that Hartley Coleridge used to say, "that his father's character and *habits* are here preserved," &c. Now, there is very little reference to habits in the stanzas describing the second character in the poem; while the allusions to habit are numerous in those verses which refer to the first of the two men. As Mr Dowden's suggestion is based upon a letter from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Sir Humphrey Davy, I may quote verbatim from that letter rather than give a summary of it:—

"Greta Hall, February 3, 1801. . . . A gentleman resident here, his name Calvert, an idle, good-hearted, and ingenious man, has a great desire to commence fellow student with me and Wordsworth in chemistry. He is an intimate friend of Wordsworth's, and he has proposed to W. to take a house which he (Calvert) has nearly built, called Windy Brow, in a delicious situation, scarce half-a-mile from Greta Hall, the residence of S. T. Coleridge, Esq., and so for him (Calvert) to live with them, *i.e.*, Wordsworth and his sister. In this case he means to build a little laboratory, &c. Wordsworth has not quite decided, but is strongly inclined to adopt the scheme, because he and his sister have lived with Calvert on the same footing, and are much attached to him; because my health is so precarious and so much injured by wet, and his health, too, is like little potatoes, no great things, and therefore Grasmere (thirteen miles from Keswick) is too great a distance for us to enjoy each other's society, without inconvenience, as much as it would be profitable for us both; and likewise, because he feels it more necessary for him to have some intellectual pursuit less closely connected with deep passion than poetry; and is of course desirous, too, not to be so wholly ignorant of knowledge so exceedingly important. However, whether Wordsworth come or no, Calvert and I have determined to begin, and go on. Calvert is a man of sense, and some originality, and is besides what is well called a handy man. He is a good practical mechanic, &c., and is desirous to lay out any sum of money that is necessary." He goes on to ask his friend Davy, "firstly, What books it will be well for me and Calvert to purchase. Secondly, Directions for a convenient little laboratory," &c., &c., and adds in a P.S.—"An electrical machine, and a number of little nick-nacks connected with it, Mr Calvert has."

By the term "idle," applied in this letter to Calvert, Coleridge probably only meant that he had not the same ardent and enthusiastic temperament as himself. He spoke of Wordsworth in the same strain, as "that lazy fellow." I do not know when the Wordsworths lived with Calvert; but William was with him in the Isle of Wight in the summer of 1793, and in the spring of 1794 both William and Dorothy Wordsworth stayed for some weeks together at *Windy Brow* Farm-house, at Keswick. This was not the same house which

Calvert built, but it would be near it ; and it was probably the experience which the Wordsworths had of Windy Brow in 1794, that induced them to look favourably on the scheme of living with Calvert in 1801. They may have occupied rooms in the same "farm-house" in 1794, as Coleridge says they had already lived "on the same footing." Now, Mr Dowden's suggestion is that the two men referred to in the "stanzas"—both indolent, one a poet, the other a dabbler in science, and intimate with Wordsworth—are Coleridge and Calvert ; Calvert being the "noticeable man," and Coleridge the poet of the earlier stanzas. Professor Dowden's suggestion is a very interesting one. The conditions to be fulfilled are, as he puts it, the following—"Two men, (1) One, and only one, a poet ; (2) Both indolent or idle ; (3) Both intimately known to Wordsworth ; (4) One—the poet—in broken health ; (5) The other, though indolent, ingenious, 'He had inventions rare ;' (6) Interested, moreover, in natural science ; and (7) Trying to engage the other man—the poet—in his pursuits." All these conditions seem to have been fulfilled in Coleridge and Calvert ; while the date of their residence at Greta Hall and Windy Brow Cottage also agree. There are others who think that neither Coleridge nor Wordsworth is referred to in these stanzas ; but the Fenwick note is explicit in its reference to Coleridge. A very plausible case might be made out—as is hinted at in the note which follows the poem—in favour of a simple transposition of the reference in the stanzas, Coleridge being supposed to be described in the first four, and Wordsworth in the latter verses ; especially if we connect the clause in the Fenwick note, "Coleridge living with us much at this time," with the first line of the poem,

Within our happy Castle there dwelt One.

NOTE TO POEM ADDRESSED TO *H. C.*, *Six Years Old* ; pp. 309-10.

The following postscript to a letter from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Sir Humphrey Davy, dated Keswick, Friday evening, July 25, 1800, is an excellent illustration of this poem :—"Hartley is a spirit that dances on an aspen leaf ; the air that yonder sallow-faced and yawning tourist is breathing, is to my babe a perpetual nitrous oxide. Never was more joyous creature born. Pain with him is so wholly transubstantiated by the joys that had rolled on before, and rushed on after, that oftentimes five minutes after his mother has whipt him he has gone up and asked her to whip him again." (See *Fragmentary Remains, Literary and Scientific*, of Sir Humphrey Davy, Bart., pp. 78, 79.)

NOTE TO *The Brothers* ; pp. 106-125, AND TO *Michael* ; pp. 126-144.

The following is an extract from a letter addressed by Wordsworth to Charles James Fox in 1802, accompanying a copy of *Lyrical Ballads* :—
 “In the two poems, ‘*The Brothers*’ and ‘*Michael*,’ I have attempted to draw a picture of the domestic affections, as I know they exist amongst a class of men who are now almost confined to the north of England. They are small independent *proprietors* of land, here called ‘statesmen,’ men of respectable education, who daily labour on their own little properties. The domestic affections will always be strong amongst men who live in a country not crowded with population ; if these men are placed above poverty. But, if they are proprietors of small estates which have descended to them from their ancestors, the power which these affections will acquire amongst such men, is inconceivable by those who have only had an opportunity of observing hired labourers, farmers, and the manufacturing poor. Their little tract of land serves as a kind of permanent rallying point for their domestic feelings, as a tablet on which they are written, which makes them objects of memory in a thousand instances, when they would otherwise be forgotten. It is a fountain fitted to the nature of social man, from which supplies of affection as pure as his heart was intended for, are daily drawn. This class of men is rapidly disappearing. . . . The two poems that I have mentioned were written with a view to show that men who do not wear fine clothes can feel deeply. ‘*Pectus enim est quod disertos facit, et vis mentis. Ideoque imperitis quoque, si modo sint aliquo affectu concitati, verba non desunt.*’ The poems are faithful copies from nature ; and I hope whatever effect they may have upon you, you will at least be able to perceive that they may excite profitable sympathies in many kind and good hearts ; and may in some small degree enlarge our feelings of reverence for our species, and our knowledge of human nature, by showing that our best qualities are possessed by men whom we are too apt to consider, not with reference to the points in which they resemble us, but to those in which they manifestly differ from us.” (See *Correspondence of Sir Thomas Hanmer*, by Sir Henry Burnbury, p. 436.)—
 Ed.

